

London School of Economics and Political Science

Generations of Migration:

Schooling, Youth & Transnationalism in the Philippines

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Abstract

The Philippines is one of the world's largest 'sending communities' for international labour migrants, with roughly 10% of the population 'absent' due to emigrations associated with permanent relocation or short-term contract work. Anthropologists studying Filipino migrations have often focussed on the migrants themselves, and particularly their experiences of diaspora and transnationalism in the present; this thesis instead looks at the perspectives of those who remain in the Philippines, particularly the children and young people who are affected by labour migration, and who often consider working overseas as part of their own futures.

The thesis investigates children's and young people's social lives in the province of Batangas, exploring their labour practices, kinship relations and, most importantly, their education and schooling. Findings are based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork in two educational institutions: a public secondary school in a small rural village, and a private vocational college in a larger 'peri-urban' town. Research was primarily conducted with children and young people who attended the school or college, as well as their teachers, families and communities.

I argue that understandings of the purpose and practice of schooling have become thoroughly entwined with the transnational economies of labour migration and remittances. This process has generated or contributed to wide-ranging cultural vocabularies for talking about and acting on the future and the potential of young people, which encompass idioms pertaining to the moral value of children, concepts of movement and mobility, indebtedness across intergenerational relations, and the 'domestication' of external or foreign sources power. My conclusions contribute to anthropologies of childhood and youth, critical analysis of the articulation of schooling and labour, theories of global capitalism and transnationalism, and themes within the wider ethnographic study of the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

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Generations of Migration:

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Introduction

Education and Export in the Philippines

In many towns and villages in the Philippines, it is hard to overstate the scale and public presence of schooling infrastructure. In small towns, the presence at 6am and 4pm of elementary and secondary-level schoolchildren in public spaces as they arrive at or leave schools is overwhelming: thousand-strong armies of crisp white shirts and tartan or checked skirts crowd into *jeepneys* and fast-food stalls. In the towns with big high schools and colleges, the presence of an 'educational complex' is even more apparent. Schools are always decorated with large tarpaulin banners triumphantly pronouncing the names of graduating or prizewinning students, and in public spaces - on placards on top of *jeepneys*, adorning marketplace stands, on flags at the side of the road, attached to *barangay* (neighbourhood) entrance gateways - there are a variety of adverts for new rounds of enrolment or discounted tuition fees.

While I conducted my fieldwork in Batangas province, one chain of colleges, the International Science Academy, ran an advert that explicitly linked its educational program to the possibility of working overseas. The advert featured four smiling, youthful students dressed for a particular jobs: a chef in whites, engineer in a hard hat holding rolled-up blueprints, a woman in a suit, and a nurse in a pink uniform. This kind of imagery in itself was not an unusual tactic for promoting vocational colleges such as this; what was distinctive was the skyline behind these characters, composed of several famous landmarks from around the world - the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, the Burj Khalifa, Big Ben - while an aeroplane soared over their heads.

Overseas migration from the Philippines is not insignificant. For 2013, a stock estimate of the number of Filipinos living outside of the Philippines was placed at 10,238,614, repre-

senting roughly 10% of the total population of the Philippines (Philippine Statistics Authority 2013a). This group returns remittances to the country valued, in 2014, at 24.35 billion USD per year (Philippine Statistics Authority 2015b). The Philippines is remarkable in terms of its economic and demographic relationship with its citizens living overseas: few countries receive more money from abroad than the Philippines, and it is also the homeland for the world's third-largest diaspora (Agbola & Acupan 2010: 387). Political rhetoric in the Philippines surrounding OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) has persisted since large-scale labour emigration was first incorporated into macroeconomic policy by Ferdinand Marcos in 1974: during my fieldwork, in November 2012, President of the Senate of the Philippines Juan Ponce Enrile commented that "*Ang pinakamalaking export natin is OFW ... Ang magpapalago ng bansa natin ay iyong excess population natin na sinanay natin na tumatanggap ng mga trabaho abroad that others don't want to handle*" (Our biggest export is OFWs ... What will improve our economy is the excess population that is used to accepting jobs abroad that others don't want to handle) (Macaraig 2012).

But the Philippine labour force is not low- or unskilled. Of those OFWs registered by the state, roughly 75% have at least some secondary school education, 60% have graduated from secondary school, and between 30-40% have a tertiary-level qualification (Orbeta & Abrigo 2009: 10; Scalabrini Migration Centre 2013: 51-52). Becoming an educated migrant worker like those depicted in the ISA's advertisement was thus not an unusual pathway into overseas employment, and in fact represented a defining synthesis of the potentialities inherent in both schooling and migration. But how do these potentialities actually manifest? In what ways do schoolchildren learn to become OFWs? How are the next generation of migrants created?

This thesis is premised on the idea that the absence of a tenth of the Philippines' population - and its replacement by remitted money equivalent to approximately 8.56% of the country's GDP (Philippine Statistics Authority 2015b) - structures many of the experiences of those still living in the islands. It argues that understandings of the purpose and practice of schooling and education have become thoroughly entwined with the transna-

tional economy of labour migration and remittances, and with them a wide-ranging cultural vocabulary for talking about and acting on the future, aspirations and the potential of young people. Young people's and children's experiences of overseas relatives and friends, their own movements within and beyond the Philippines, and their anticipation of potential futures within a 'culture of migration' are the animating force behind my explorations in the chapters that follow, though the scope of my analysis is broader: this study is an attempt to examine the extent to which labour migrations - their symbolism, their economy, their structuring of temporality and place - can be considered a 'social fact' in Batangas. I present evidence that their effects permeate far-flung aspects of social life in initially obscure ways, and that the contemplation of 'going abroad' can generate new imaginative repertoires applicable to other fields of cultural (re)production and social relationships.

Entering Batangas

While the Philippines' unique configuration of labour and its direct and indirect effects are an aspect of everyday life for almost all Filipinos, the Philippines and the experiences of those who live there are far from homogenous. Consequently, there are parts of the country in which the socio-economic landscape is dictated more closely by overseas migrations. My field site was selected, in part, because of its significance in patterns of migration from the Philippines. The province of Batangas is part of the administrative region of CALABARZON, which also incorporates the southern Luzon states of Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Quezon. It is south of the metropolis of Metro Manila (see *fig. 1*), has roughly the same population of 11.5 million but is spread over twenty-five times the area. This region of the Philippines has historically supplied a large proportion of Filipino labour migrants, and in 2013 CALABARZON was the province of origin for over 800,000 overseas workers: more than any other region, and nearly a fifth (18.4%) of all the Philippines' OFWs (Philippine Statistics Authority 2013).

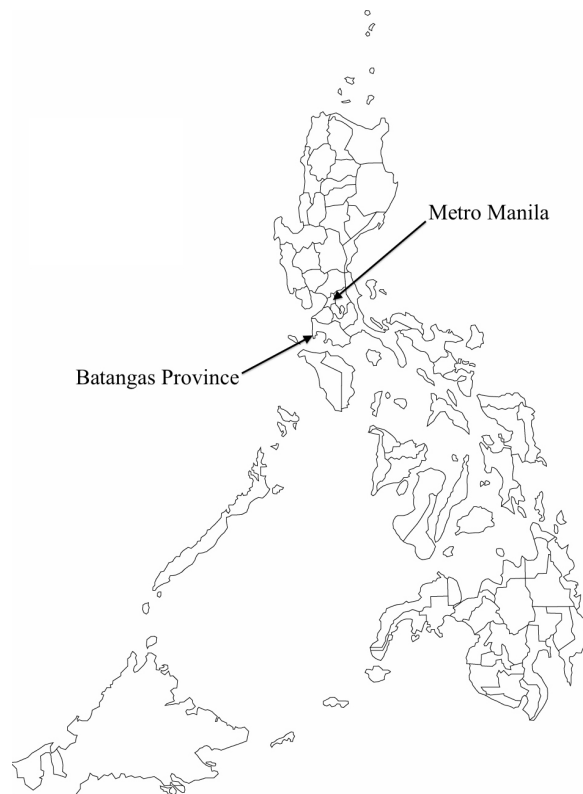


Figure 1 (Map of the Philippines, with provincial boundaries)

While the greatest concentration of ‘sending communities’ in Batangas are in the east of the province, near to the state capital Batangas City and the Mabini peninsula, the west of the province has a smaller population of transnational workers and emigrants, as well as far fewer large towns and a more agricultural economy. On the coastline, fishing competes with a small-scale tourism industry, mostly accommodating Filipino tourists from Manila, while the arable land is given over almost exclusively to sugar cane, such that harvesting and processing are major employers in this part of the province, albeit seasonally.

I came to Batangas pursuing an invitation to begin my research at a vocational college in Santa Clara¹ called the International Science Academy (ISA). Santa Clara was a centre for Spanish sea trade and Catholic Church governance, and boasts a large sixteenth-century church. It is accessible by both the Batangas provincial coast road and the main highway across the mountains of Cavite to Manila, and as such was something of a transport hub. While I continued to conduct research at the ISA and in Santa Clara, I also planned to expand the scope of my study from the college to the alma maters of some of

the students, tracing the educational trajectories of those who had arrived at the ISA from the surrounding rural areas. I began to investigate schools in satellite towns that fed the tertiary institutions of Santa Clara, with the intention of focussing on the schools in one particular settlement.

I settled on Palaw for its middling size, its possession of a combination of rural and urban households, and a number of both private and public schools. Palaw, with a population of about 6,000, is situated about 8 kilometres north of Santa Clara, next to the main highway towards Cavite and Manila, and is surrounded by sugar cane fields. It too has a large, but much younger, church, and consists of a number of small neighbourhoods, called *barangay*, in between a criss-cross of concrete roads. Most of the houses are concrete with corrugated tin roofs, though there are a number of nineteenth-century wooden houses, and some newer, smaller wooden dwellings. There are a number of municipal buildings, including a police station, mayoral offices, a Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) building, library, a local judiciary office and a public health clinic, all surrounding a large public plaza. The biggest building in the town is the basketball court, which hosts public events, and there is a marketplace towards the main road.

After arriving in western Batangas in January 2012, I spent 15 months there conducting ethnographic research with and in a number of different communities, institutions and locales. Most of my research was conducted in Tagalog, though English was spoken by some of my interlocutors, especially the teachers at the schools. During my fieldwork, I stayed briefly with a number of families, but spent most of my time lodging with a woman named Jesusa, to whom the *jeepney* driver who brought me to Palaw for the first time introduced me. Jesusa was a former overseas contract worker who was employed in a factory in Tokyo for nearly 20 years, and lived with her eleven year-old daughter, Akari. Jesusa's and her household's lives are discussed in more detail in chapters 4 and 5, and her local contacts were invaluable to me throughout my fieldwork.

While I was living with Jesusa, the majority of my time was spent focussed on two educational institutions, but indirectly incorporated several others. Palaw National High

School (NHS), was founded in 2006 and located just outside the town of Palaw, where it enrolled around 600 students between the ages of 11 and 17, who were taught by a staff of 20 teachers. Palaw NHS was a public secondary school, meaning that it was government run and was funded, via the local municipal government, by the provincial Department of Education for Batangas. This contrasted it to two other, smaller, secondary schools in the town; a private Catholic school run from the town church, and another private school. All of these schools were ‘fed’ by an array of public elementary schools (also government run), one in every *barangay* in both the rural areas and the *poblasyon*, as well as a number of private elementary schools, some of which were affiliated with smaller, Protestant, Churches.

Within Palaw National High School (Palaw NHS), I focussed my attention and time on a group of 192 students - the graduating class of 2013, aged 14-17 - so that I could follow them through their final year at high school, and with whom I conducted a short survey on their education and connections to transnational migration. The school divided this year into three separate classes of between 60 and 70 students (though due to some students dropping out, absence, and truancy, most lessons had between 50 and 60 students), who were unofficially tiered from the most academically able to the least. I spent a mixture of time in all three classes so as to study pedagogy and the application of the curriculum itself, though the majority of efforts to conduct research at the school were spent in break time, talking with students and teachers socially, as well as borrowing empty classrooms and offices to conduct interviews. It transpired that I was introduced socially to the majority of my contacts in Palaw through the high school’s students and teachers, and thus this location acted as the locus for the majority of my research in Palaw and elsewhere in Batangas.

While in Palaw, I continued to conduct fieldwork at the International Science Academy (ISA) in Santa Clara. This institution was a branch of a large chain of tertiary-level vocational colleges established in the early 1980s. Originally founded in Manila as a computing and IT training centre, at the time of my fieldwork the ISA was a highly recognisable and heavily advertised brand in Batangas, with over 200 branches in almost all major

cities in the Philippines and a habit of painting their buildings the distinctive bright yellow and blue of their livery. ISA Santa Clara was founded in 1998 and during my fieldwork had about 1,000 students enrolled. Those in charge of the branch were planning on expanding the college to include a secondary school, unaffiliated to the ISA chain. This would have had to compete with a number of other secondary schools in Santa Clara, including two prestigious Catholic institutions, a Montessori school, and a large public school, all of which provided a number of students to the ISA college intake. By the end of my first fieldwork in 2013, this project had only just got off the ground, and the brand new building built for the school on the ISA campus awaited its first intake in June, though so far very few students had enrolled.

My fieldwork in the ISA was less structured than in the high school, and students had more flexible timetables, more free time, and the teachers occasionally even insisted that I lead discussions pertinent to my research within their classes. I was also more ‘participative’ in classes at the ISA. Shortly after I had arrived in Santa Clara and made my introductions at ISA, I was invited to sit in on some of the classes. As I was roughly the same age as the students at the college,² I asked to be allowed to begin my research by attending classes as a student, wearing the different uniforms required of each class (chef whites, engineer’s overalls, business suits, etc.) and attempting to do at least some of work that the students themselves were doing. My timetable was designed to mimic the workload of a regular student, totalling 5-6 hours every day, but my classes were split between some of the different courses available: electrical engineering, programming, hotel and restaurant management, business studies, English (known as ‘communication arts’), and so on. As I expanded the scope of my research and met new contacts, I spent less time in the classrooms of the college, and more time with the students in their free time.

In addition to these two schools, I was also in contact with a number of students at more far-flung institutions, including other branches of the ISA and universities in nearby cities. Finally, I also conducted fieldwork at an adult learning program called Alternative Learning System (ALS), run from the largest elementary school in Palaw. The ALS was a

nationwide program of specialist schooling facilities set up in areas with high rates of ‘out-of-school youth’ with the aim of reintegrating them into the state schooling system and giving them new opportunities to complete their high school qualifications. In Palaw, the program only enrolled about 20 students at a time, taught by one or two teachers, but through this group I met other teachers and students who were involved in classes and programs elsewhere in the region.

A major challenge for the research was, as with all ethnographic projects that focus on children and youth, the fact that many of their life situations were in the process of changing rapidly. I chose to focus on the older students in the high school as their subjective views on their position in the life course were, understandably, more oriented towards their future directions and decision than their younger classmates. This did mean, however, that very shortly before the end of my fieldwork in May 2013, the final-year students at Palaw NHS graduated and began to start a new stage of their lives. One of the mechanisms deployed to record this was to introduce a partly ‘longitudinal’ element to the study, by conducting a second period of fieldwork in Batangas in 2014. I visited Palaw and Santa Clara, but also followed a number of young people who had graduate from high school the previous year, who now either worked away from Palaw or had continued their education at a university. I conducted follow-up interviews with them and, where possible, members of their new social groups and their families back in Palaw. In addition to this, I have stayed in contact with a large number of my informants through online communication including Facebook and Skype, which were widely used in Batangas.

As will become evident, despite the fact that my fieldwork began and continued to be oriented towards the schools, the scope of my research extended into many other institutions and aspects of social life. Particularly in Palaw, the centrality of education as a project in which social investment and interest was high, the role of teachers as public figures, and the involvement of the local population in school projects (and the school’s population in local projects), meant that I was increasingly integrated into (or at least recognised in) the community life of Palaw and Santa Clara. The following sections present an overview of the themes and topics on which my research touched.

Labour Migrations, Mobility and ‘the Foreign’

In *Going Underground*, journalist Rey Ventura recounts working alongside male Filipino construction workers in Japan, and described this account of the economic effects of his interlocutors’ incomes back home:

“The church is the place where the women and children can display their new wealth, and driving to church - even if it’s only a hundred yards - is particularly desirable. White clothes for the children, high heels, a hair-do and a veil for the mother - the chic, devout look. Then the newly wealthy families begin to find excuses to invite the priest to celebrate mass at home: thanksgiving for a graduation, school honours, an eighteenth birthday début. Unfamiliar excuses for parties are found - Mother’s day, Father’s day, Valentine’s Day... The houses of the newly rich draw crowds of children in the evening, with their videos and enormous TVs. The local politicians and dignitaries are drawn in, to partake and admire, and this becomes a passport to real status, and even power. Often in the past, people have written about Filipino migrant workers as if the issue was one of simple economic need. The issue is economic, but it is not simple. It is not the case that a man faces starvation in Negros and so decides to go to Kotubuki. If he was facing starvation in Negros, he wouldn’t begin to be able to think about going abroad.”

(Ventura 1992: 162-163)

It is the significance of the enormous TVs, the parties with officials, and the high heels worn to church that is of interest here. Ventura’s conclusion that labour migration is far from a last resort requires an appreciation of the purpose of labour migration that is not limited to survival or subsistence. To this end, many of the directions in which I pursue the effects of remittances and migrations go beyond the material. Money that so obviously comes from ‘abroad’, weighs heavily on expectations of economic opportunity, potential success, and plans for the future. It generates a social and economic environment that is “engulfed with the notion of overseas migration as Filipinos’ ultimate ‘opportunity’” (Guevarra 2010: ix) and in which overseas Filipino workers “hover on the edges of its consciousness, rendering its boundaries porous with their dollar-driven com-

ings and goings” (Rafael 1997: 269). A wide range of scholarship, which I will detail briefly here, informs my own study of this environment in Palaw and Santa Clara.

The kind of inquiry I am attempting contributes to anthropological engagements with economic migrations that have succeeded in complicating neoclassical economic ‘push-pull’ explanations for such movements of people in favour of a more holistic and subjective level of analysis (Kearney 1986: 341). Beginning with a wider concern with demonstrating the multi-directionality of ‘global flows’ in late capitalism, anthropologists have adopted and developed Eric Wolf’s application of Frank’s dependency theory and Wallerstein’s ‘world system’ to colonial history (Wolf 1982: 22-23), as well as David Harvey’s and Anthony Giddens’ later insights into ‘space-time distancing’ (Giddens 1984; Harvey 1990), into ethnographic work on the social relationships created across distances and time by migration. The argument that twentieth-century economic migrations were a different phenomenon from those of earlier eras, in that they significantly increased the potential for ‘return migration’ with the migrant’s lifetime (Gmelch 1980), laid the foundations for a new approach. Discussions of migrations were required to account for the multiplicity of locations and identities that could be adopted or lost by an individual over the life course, giving rise to theorisations of transnationalism and deterritorialisation (Kearney 1995: 556-559; Appadurai 1996; Vertovec 2013: 3-5).

Within Philippines Studies, emphasis on transnational identity and the Filipino diaspora’s incorporation into states and social environments beyond the Philippines has dominated anthropological research into Filipino experiences of migration. Studies have explored the lives of Filipinos in Bologna and Barcelona (Zontini 2010), Hong Kong (Constable 1997; McKay 2010), London (Ong & Cabañes 2011), Rome (Tacoli 1999; Parreñas 2001b), Saudi Arabia (Johnson 2010), and the United States (Parreñas 2001b; Manalansan 2003; de la Cruz 2009; Gonzalves 2009), and have also considered locating and examining the diaspora in unorthodox sites, such as online communities (Tyner & Kuhlke 2000; Constable 2003; Sampson 2003; Ignacio 2005), or working on board ships (Swift 2011; Acejo 2013). This literature variously explores how Filipinos overseas have negotiated practices of labour, transnational kinship, religion, relationships to both their host

communities and the Philippine state, and conceptions of power, personhood, and sexuality while absent from the islands themselves.

Despite this wealth of anthropological literature on transnationalism and diaspora, studies of labour migration as viewed from *within* the Philippines are less commonplace. While exceptions to this generalisation are discussed below, it remains the case that ethnographic accounts of ‘sending communities’, in which labour migration is a specific object of study are not numerous. This thesis attempts to redress this imbalance. While placing specific emphasis on the ‘sending community’ in Palaw and Santa Clara may suggest a failure to reflect the advances towards the deterritorialised ethnography already made by previous theorists of migration, I argue that in the context of a field of Philippines studies in which the view from the diaspora is well-documented, the anthropology of migration that insists upon transnationalism as a defining aspect of migrants’ subjectivities must also explore the extent to which processes of deterritorialisation can incur upon the lives of those partially, unsuccessfully or only *potentially* implicated in migrations.

In this spirit, this thesis emulates ethnographic work on migration that includes within its remit those who do not or cannot migrate, and that looks beyond the immediate impact of migration on institutions, relations and culture. Ethnographies of ‘sending communities’ do not really constitute a sub-field of their own, but in referring to them I have in mind scholars who have conducted fieldwork in places and at times when large-scale out-migration was a feature of their informants everyday life, as it was in Batangas. Katy Gardner’s work on transnationalism and migration in Bangladesh and Britain (1993; 1995; 2002; 2008) stands out as an example of an attempt to include both origins and destinations within the same study. Her emphasis on *emigration* via a theory of ‘journeying’ is a key analytic concept that clarifies what I mean by a ‘sending-centred’ approach, as it convincingly renders migrations as a cultural enterprise, as well as a material one: “whilst all journeys are physical, they are also ‘acts of the imagination’, in which home and destination are continually reimagined, and thus forever changed” (1995: 35).

This consideration of the symbolic and structural significance of migrations, allowing theories of migrations as culturally productive in arenas beyond the obvious, is a theoretical step this thesis also attempts to make. Specifically, I want to show how the cultural production of childhood and youth are articulated with migrations, and in this regard follow the recent work of anthropologists specifically concerned with children and young people's position in sending communities. Cati Coe's ethnographic work in Ghana and the destinations of her Ghanaian migrant informants (2008; 2011, 2012, 2013; Coe et al 2011) addresses these themes: "[c]hildren are often at the centre of migration processes - as motivators for migration or as migrants themselves ... A focus on children and childhood within migration flows provides a view of an imaginary about childhood that parents and children themselves are increasingly engaging in and actively constructing" (Coe et al 2011: 3). Coe's interest in, for example, the dynamics of parenting from overseas (2011) and children's imaginations of the life course 'abroad' (2012) are suggestive topics for the anthropology of childhood in contexts of transnationalism, and this thesis attempts to develop and emulate this kind of ethnographic engagement.

Contributions to the analysis of sending communities in the Philippines broadly fall into two camps. First, there is ethnographic work on migration from the Philippines that attempts a holistic approach to the phenomenon, often through multi-sited fieldwork. Most notable in this area is Deirdre McKay, her work charting a series of movements from her original field site in Haliap, in Ifugao province, to locations around the world in which migrants from Haliap had gone to work (2012). Her concerns in this ethnography are principally with the degrees to which affective ties between villagers and families are maintained transnationally, and with how international labour migration ties with particular narratives of modernity. However, she builds upon a wide-ranging body of work, which explores, amongst other topics, how practices of migration impact upon agricultural practice through influxes of remittance capital (2003), sensual and habitual responses to 'home' as place (2006), and how material and ritual culture can be simultaneously experienced at home and in the diaspora (2010). The most significant contribution in a similar vein is that of Mark Johnson, whose expansion of his earlier material on gay beauty pageants in Sulu (1996, 1997) has incorporated theories of transnationalism into his work

on gender and sexuality (1998a). Further, he has developed work on material culture in the southern Philippines, arguing that particular practices of consumption must be regarded as crucial to engagements with foreign sources of power; a register of potency in which goods brought back to Sulu by labour migrants occupy special significance (1998b: 229).

The second major branch of Philippines-sited studies of migration is characterised by the work of the Scalabrini Research Centre; an influential collective of Manila-based scholars working on labour migration since the late 1980s. While spurred by the increasing academic concerns with transnationalism and migration in the late 1980s, Scalabrini-led research was also influenced by the group's Catholic background: it was founded by the Scalabrinian priest Renato Graziano Battistella. Much of the scholarship produced by members of the Centre thus reflected both a macroeconomic concern with the implications of migration for growth and development (Abella 1992) or overreach of government into controlling migration (Battistella 1995), and a moral concern with the extent to which family roles were being disrupted (Paz Cruz & Paganoni 1989) or children were neglected through parental absence or marital breakdown (Battistella & Conaco 1998). Additionally, a concern with the possible weaknesses of character of Filipino migrant workers reflected a widespread elite concern with the capabilities of working-class Filipinos to adequately represent the ideals of the nation: "contract workers are now so highly regarded as models for success that children dream of working overseas someday. The Filipinos' flexibility can, at times, become a liability when love of foreign culture replaces love of national culture" (Asis 1992: 85).

This strand of analysis - into the possibility of Filipino cultural and psychological traits impacting migration practices - is reliant on a longer-standing field of Philippine cultural studies, also based at the Institute of Philippine Culture at the Ateneo de Manila, dominated by the work of Frank Lynch, Mary Hollnsteiner, and Felipe Jocano. Most contemporary anthropological accounts, following Zeus Salazar's (1985) dissection and historicisation of the concept of '*sikolohiyang Pilipino*' (Filipino psychology), are implicitly critical of an objective appraisal of Filipino 'values', 'psychology' or 'philosophy',

though they maintain a concern with the applicability of some of its terminology, particularly where informants of their studies reproduce them (e.g. Parreñas 2001b: 109).

In addition to analysing ‘migration’ as both an ideological concept and the everyday subjective experiences of migrants and those around them, as Gardner and McKay do in their work, anthropologists have also demonstrated the need to address the roles of institutional or structuring forces in migrations. These avenues of study have suggested ways of incorporating power into accounts of migration; a position characterised by the assertion that “migrations do not just happen, they are produced” (Sassen 1993: 73). Following Sassen, it is part of the work of this thesis to explain both the production of Filipino labour migrations, and the production of the discourse that surrounds them. Central to this level of analysis is the role of the state.

The appearance of the state in the ‘Scalabrini school’ of migration studies is often fleeting or peripheral. Authors tended to view the state as an institution capable of interventions (such as Marcos’s introduction of the wide-ranging Labour Code in 1974) into economic processes of labour migration (Asis 1992: 70-77), but would only mediate the forces of the market, which were the root determinant of mass labour migration (Battistella & Paganoni 1992: 2). The argument that policies of various governments have played an influential role in the movements of Filipino labour migrants is difficult to counter, however. Many analyses, by thoroughly reviewing the history of policy, particularly in the Marcos era, suggests that it is in fact the Philippine state which has instituted the possibility of a derestricted labour market (e.g. Gonzalez 1998: 25-36). Most significant in this history was the state’s co-option of the institutional and legal apparatus of migration from the country from the late 1970s to early 1980s, directly or via sub-contractors such as ‘manpower agencies’ (Stahl 1988), culminating in the establishment of the Philippines Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) in 1982. So comprehensive was the control of the state over migration by the end of Marcos’ rule that it was described as “Southeast Asia’s first completely centralised labour export market” (Gibson & Graham 1986: 131).

Further scholarship positions governance of labour in the Philippines within international - even neo-colonial - relations. Institutions of global capital and American imperial governance such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank have been shown to have extensive influence over Philippine government bureaucracy and economic policy (Tadiar 2004: 51-52). Such a state of affairs demands that 'labour export' policies must also be considered as 'labour import' policies by nation-states exerting political, legal and administrative influence on Philippine economic policy, as well as on the technologies of border control, immigration, and labour brokerage (Rodriguez 2010: 1, 53). As a variety of scholarship has shown, the 'national' experience of labour migration in the Philippines has been a fertile ground for the cultivation of ideological narratives surrounding money, death, nationalism, sexuality, religion and sacrifice (Rafael 1997; Constable 2003; Tadiar 2004; de la Cruz 2010). Migration has currency in the wider social imagination, and the state has exerted great influence over the particular significances it has come to hold.

Much scholarship on labour migration from the Philippines consequently looks to analyse state infrastructure and policy as the 'productive' force behind migration. James Tyner, for example, expands on this idea of production through a Foucauldian framework that argues for the discursive production of migrants through the apparatus of state bureaucracies (2004: 19). Tyner describes the discursive formulation, by the Marcos government, of Filipino labour as a sacrificial resource (*ibid*: 33), and the subsequent replacement of this in more recent government discourse by the expression of labour migration as self-actualising. This requires the state to help to realise its citizens' freedom of movement: migrants' "decision to move is seen as liberating, empowering, a personal choice made in the context of full understanding of the risks and rewards" (*ibid*: 49). Of course, this particular discourse of 'freedom' is itself rooted in neoliberal political philosophies (Guevarra 2010: 51), and effectively diverts social risks away from the state and onto citizens.

Though Tyner provides an extremely useful elaboration of the disciplinary forces at work in the processes of labour migration, Anna R. Guevarra has argued that his analysis is too reliant on the construction of a linear bureaucratic process of labour migrant production, and is thus inadequate in its exploration of the complex relations between citizen and

state which constitute these processes (2010: 205). Guevarra's own work shifts her analysis away from the explicit bureaucracies of labour migration themselves, and towards describing the 'social imaginary' of labour migration (*ibid*: 3-4) and how this is activated to cultivate an 'ethos of migration' (*ibid*: 23; c.f. Rodriguez 2010: 39), which the state can use to 'market' Filipino workers around the world. She concludes that "the labour-brokering process is ... fundamentally about image building", and that this process implicates the state, private sector 'brokers' (2010: 121-122, 209), and the workers themselves. However, despite emphasising the concept of an 'ethos of migration' as (re)produced and experienced by migrant workers themselves, Guevarra does not explore how this ethos might manifest in everyday experiences, confining her analysis to migrants interactions with the state bureaucracy.

Throughout the following chapters, I attempt to expand upon Guevarra's concept of the 'ethos of migration' and examine its applicability to fields of social relationships beyond my informants' encounters with the state. In this sense, I attempt to more closely adhere to the approaches adopted by McKay and Gardner in their engagements with labour migration from the perspective of the sending community. Within this perspective, I base my argument in the stories of young people whose personal encounters with migration are tripartite. First, many have experienced the impacts of transnational migrations by siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and parents, and as such have responses to ideologies of migration shaped by narratives of sacrifice, loss, or responsibility. My discussion of this topic builds upon the work of Filomeno Aguilar (2009; 2013) and Rhacel Parreñas (2001b, 2005a) by suggesting an expansion of studies of transnational kinship to incorporate relations beyond parent-child and spousal relationships, which have been understudied, and under-theorised, in accounts of migration from the Philippines. Secondly, the expectation of young people's own future migrations influences how decisions are made and relationships are formed in their lives. The possibilities of going overseas are viewed as implicit in various kinds of consumption, different social relationships, and acquisition of particular kinds of capital. Thirdly, young people have often participated in migrations of their own, whether for work or, vitally, schooling.

Education and Schooling

In *The Promise of the Foreign*, Vicente Rafael discusses a passage from José Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*:

“Rizal describes the conditions at the colony’s Dominican university ... In class, one’s main concern was to avoid being marked absent. Yet one’s presence amounted to little, since it entailed the mechanical recitation of texts and the occasional answer to questions as trivial as they were abstract. Education was a matter of hearing what one has already heard before, such as the *sermonitas* on submission and humility, just as it required the repetition of formulaic answers to predictable demands. Nothing truly new was allowed to emerge, and in this sense the classroom was an extension of the church. Hence, for example, the scientific instruments in the physics laboratory were never used by the students and were taken out only on rare occasions to impress important visitors ... to memorise and repeat the words of a textbook is to turn oneself into a vessel for the passage of the words of authority. One is expected not to make these words one’s own, but rather to submit to their force and bear them back to their source as the friar stood by and measured one’s fidelity. Schooling led not to a future but to the perpetuation of familiar forms of servility. It was meant to maintain students in their stupidity. Yet what made the classroom different from the church was that students were required to recite individually. They could not receive a grade and pass the course, Rizal writes, until they had been recognised (*ser conocido*) and called upon by the professor. By recognising the student, it is as if the professor sees in him a capacity to speak up. At the same time, that capacity constitutes a potential for disruption. In speaking up, the student might also talk back; in repeating the textbook, he might make a mistake and thus utter something uncalled for and unexpected. Such possibilities make the classroom a volatile arena for the reiteration of authority, a place for the potential exposure of authority’s limits.”

(Rafael 2006: 45-46)

In Jose Rizal's description of the classroom interactions between the teachers and students in *La Clase de Fisica*, we can recognise the struggle over social reproduction. For Rizal, the political authority of the Dominican friars, the Catholic Church, and the Spanish colonial state is at stake, temporarily exposed to the imperfect and thus disruptive recitations of the Filipino students. For those who have taken the classroom and the school as a locus of their study, such conflict will be familiar. Indeed, for those considering institutions of schooling located in colonial and postcolonial contexts, the need to contemplate how classrooms can become both tools of and vulnerabilities in the state projects that propagate them is vital. Such contemplation necessarily implicates and leads anthropological analysis towards institutions, persons, social relations, and material realities stretching well beyond the school itself. The body of work devoted to the school and its various iterations, therefore, still holds water as a means to study social worlds beyond the classroom. Certainly for Rizal, the physics classroom's dynamics are evocative, if not microcosmic, of the political realities of the Philippines as a Spanish colony at the end of the nineteenth century.

A fundamental element of a study of schooling, then, is to offer a description of its relationship to the social relations that create it. This attempt manifests at two levels, as the classroom can be representative not only as a particular example of how society *is*, but also as an objectified form of how various actors might hope society *should be*. The allure of the study of schooling surely originates in this core disjuncture: a conception of schooling as simultaneously made out of existent social relations and vulnerable to the myriad manipulations of its constitutive actors. It is also what makes the school a profoundly modern entity: its existence is in part premised on the idea that the future has not yet arrived. This thesis outlines the ways in which students, teachers, family members and others negotiated the central contradictions of the schooling project, and experienced the presence of schooling as a reminder of the ongoing and incomplete pursuit of modernity in the Philippines. This outline extends beyond the school however, as it is important to note that schooling in Batangas was far from a homogenous enterprise, nor was it without competition and contestation as means by which futures could be realised.

My fieldwork in Batangas occurred at a moment when my interlocutors were well versed in (and mostly convinced of) the possibilities of successful schooling. Schooling's effects were supposed to encompass a number of different changes at the personal level, but also more broadly at a diffuse societal level. Primarily, successful schooling promised a profound shift in quality of life for the student and their family. In addition to these anticipated economic effects, schooling was also expected to alter, or at least develop, personhood. By instilling values such as obedience, punctuality, respectfulness, determination, good-naturedness, community spirit and even piety, public schools were supposed to establish particular kinds of value in their graduates.

A central concern of this thesis is how the myriad processes involved in schooling - ascription of certain kinds of value, aspiration to higher standards of living, societal change, articulations of modernity - relate to practices of migration. In order to do this, my discussion is stimulated by the insights of the diverse field of the anthropology of schooling and education, and in particular its concern with the ways in which schooling's 'cultural' effects exceed those determined by curricula (Levinson, Foley & Holland, eds. 1996; Reed-Danahay 1996; Luykx 1999; Rival 2000; Froerer 2007; Bénéï 2008).

Because this thesis closely inspects the entanglement of schooling with migration practices, it is necessary to explore the ways in which schooling can fail. As recent scholarship on Filipino migrations has shown (Constable 2015), failure to meet the high expectations surrounding migrations overseas can result in a kind of paralysis, where return itself is rendered shameful or impossible. I look to show how schooling can fail too, in ways related to parallel failures of migration. Firstly, the financial or geographic inaccessibility of schooling for some causes an outright exclusion from the futures to which it lays claim, and thus can be experienced or critiqued as a flawed mechanism for modern nation building. Concerns with the failures of schooling were often expressed as part of a wider constellation of concerns with governance in the Philippines. Often the perceived corruption of officials and politicians was associated with their obsession with image and celebrity instead of public service, a criticism that stimulates comparison with debates

over the substantive content, quality and purpose of schooling, and the implicit ideology of schooling under capitalism (Freire 1985).

Secondly, there exists an incongruity between expectations of labour demand and the responsiveness of labour supply. In other words, because the almost sole determinant of the success of schooling lay in the subsequent acquisition of particular kinds of labour, mismatches between the fickle global labour market and attempts by schools to respond to its demands can leave students without relevant qualifications. The high turnover of courses offered by the ISA demonstrates their responsiveness to perceived changes in international labour demand (to which they explicitly stated their sensitivity), but the state too was aware of such changes. During my fieldwork I witnessed the disorganised and unpopular implementation of the K+12 program, designed to extend secondary schooling by two years to make education in the Philippine internationally competitive, and also frequently encountered students studying government-authored 'TESDA' (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) qualifications, designed to have value internationally and be relevant for those seeking employment overseas.

I thus suggest ways in which schooling in Palaw and Santa Clara cannot be read solely as a smoothly functioning Althusserian state apparatus under global capitalism. Rizal's '*La Clase de Fisica*' presents a familiar rendering of power in the Philippines, in that the firmer the grasp of authority, the more likely its subject is to escape it. While anthropologies of schooling and learning have often described how pedagogy can be a site for resistance and political struggle, I present a slightly different thesis. Following theorists such as Vicente Rafael and Reynaldo Ileto, I suggest parallels between the workings of power in schooling and that identified in Tagalog responses to early Spanish conversion attempts (Rafael 1988), or in nineteenth-century popular religious movements (Ileto 1979). By considering teacher-student and other pedagogical relationships in Batangas, and the practice of schooling more generally, in these terms, I situate them within a Southeast Asian - or even specifically Philippine - politics. In this framing, schooling can be considered in terms of its ironic potential, in which students can be made more powerful

through unorthodox or subtle engagements with the ideological forms that schools might attempt to reproduce.

Class and Kinship, Youth and Temporality

Two implicit themes in the literatures introduced so far have been the significance of kin relations in practices of migration and schooling, and the potential for an analysis of these in relation to class. In historical and ethnographic scholarship on the Philippines, there is a persistent argument that kin relations and political or status relations are profoundly entangled. The position of ‘the family’ as a political unit around which power is organised, particularly among elites, has been considered as central to understanding Philippine politics. A typical rendering of the political role of ‘the family’ in the Philippines is offered by Alfred McCoy:

“After generations of experience Filipinos have learned to rely upon their families for the sorts of social services that the state provides in many developed nations ... [the family] provides employment and capital, educates and socialises the young, assures medical care, shelters its handicapped and aged, and strives, above all else, to transmit its name, honour, lands capital and values to the next generation.”

(McCoy 2009: 7)

In this thesis, however, I pursue the limits of the ideological construction of ‘the family’ in various directions, and seek to complicate some of its foundational analytic elements. Of importance to understanding ‘the family’ in the Philippines is the way in which it has been constructed as a number of distinct ideological edifices, which are used in overlapping but often-distinct ways, and are oriented to different political aims. In McCoy’s work, he explores the centrality of the ‘family’ to elite politics, focussing on the control exerted at both local and national levels by an oligarchy of dynastic family groups, or ‘clans’.

A further iteration of ‘family’ in the Philippines is its place in legislative and elite political discourse where it is deployed to accommodate Catholic moral sensibilities relating to

‘family values’; as shown, for example, in attempts to reduce rate of children born out of wedlock by lowering the legal age of marriage (Tan 2006). Nicole Constable’s work on transnational marriages between ‘Western’ men and Filipino women also points towards how a discursive construction of Filipino, Christian - in opposition to American, secular - ‘family values’ was part of the attraction of women from the Philippines to American men (2003: 153), a moral ideology present amongst young women in Filipino-American communities too (Espiritu 2001). Finally, and relatedly, ‘the family’ has been entangled within the construction of the nation-state. For instance in the 1987 constitution “recognises the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family” (Article 2, Section 12), and “recognises the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development” (Article 15, Section 1).

However, this thesis explores if, in accepting these ideologies, kinship in the Philippines has been characterised as ‘pre-modern’ or even ‘primitive’. Classic sociological definitions of the ‘nuclear family’ (e.g. Parsons & Bales 1956) are intrinsically modernist, in that they are excised of kinds of political and economic relations and ‘purified’ as a specific realm of kinship (McKinnon & Cannell 2013). In this thesis I examine the effects of oppositions between a ‘native Filipino’ organisation of the family, which captures a wider number of relatives within a kind of political clan, and the ideologies of the ‘nuclear family’ present in Batangas. This inquiry draws attention to ways in which the ideological power of ‘family’ as an explanatory tool of both analysts of Philippine politics and relatedness and Filipinos themselves maps inexactly onto social relations in everyday life.

Such a project parallels critiques of classic studies of Southern Italian and Sicilian ‘family’, which bear resemblance to the ‘clans’ identified in the Philippines. Many studies considered kinship in the region “less an instrument of *social expression* as in English kinship, than a *formal tie* implying rights and obligations” (Firth & Garigue 1956: 97; cf. Blok 2002; Boissevain 2013), and thus framed it as somehow ‘contaminated’ by politics and economics in the form of ‘amoral familism’ (Banfield 1958)³. My own analysis investigates what is unveiled by deconstructing such ideologies of modernity and kinship,

by drawing on other anthropological work on the subject - particularly McKinnon & Cannell (2013) - and by demonstrating the ways in which kinship operated within the economy of remittances and the aforementioned geography of mobility both in and beyond the Philippines.

One of the principal, and most influential, explorations of kinship and status in the pre-colonial Philippines comes from William H. Scott's deconstructions of early Spanish colonial texts (1985, 1994). Scott builds a speculative model of the social and political structures of the pre-Hispanic Philippines, suggesting that the class structure of sixteenth-century Tagalog (that is, southern Luzon) society was premised upon the organisation of '*utang*' (debt) between actors at different levels of hierarchy: one's position depended upon whom one was indebted to, and who owed you debts. These levels, however, were "caught in the midst of ongoing development and decay" (Scott 1994: 122-123) as debt was continually reciprocated and the fortunes of individuals waxed and waned, constituting "infinite gradations of debt bondage" (Cannell 1999: 10). Expanding on Scott's work, Vicente Rafael's (1988) treatment of the concept of '*utang na loob*' (lit. inside debt) further complicates this thesis. For Rafael, inclusion in such hierarchies of indebtedness did not merely constitute one's economic status, as *utang na loob* could be used at a more ethical level to characterise social relations themselves: in this way *all* social relations have the capacity to be framed as debt relations of one kind or another, a fact demonstrated by Rafael through accounts of Tagalog interactions with the missionaries, and with God (1988: 132).

The connection between this construction of debt hierarchies and kinship is through the common usage of *utang na loob* in earlier ethnographic work to characterise relations between family members as distinct (Kaut 1961). By investigating the ways in which kinship relations (and many other social and political relations) in the Philippines are often articulated through debt, obligation and responsibility, this thesis contributes to this anthropological literature, but also aims to deploy its insights in the associated anthropological studies of childhood, friendship and intergenerational relations. The tendency of the 'cultural studies' tradition in the Philippines, best expressed in the work of Mary

Hollnsteiner (1968, 1973) and Frank Lynch (1970), was to assert the functional value of relations of indebtedness in maintaining social order. However, rather than an inert and beneficial social system, it in fact seems that even in incidences of the breakdown of hierarchy, such as the Balinese cockfight, Southeast Asian polities built on hierarchised debt relations were rigged in favour of the elite, who could concoct situations in which peasants were encouraged or lured into relations of debt with royal elites (Vickers 1996: 61; Graeber 2011: 158). Graeber, specifically addressing the work of Clifford Geertz (1973; 1980), notes a “peculiar blindness” (2011: 413) in anthropological accounts of Southeast Asia to the pernicious aspects of the politics of indebtedness. The balance between a critique of debt peonage, particularly within the relations of global capital, and recognition of the culturally specific elements of unequal relations in Batangas will use and contribute to these bodies of work.

A key aim of my fieldwork was to explore how remittance economies, in tandem with other transnational flows, have affected and integrated with existing understandings of class, hierarchy and kinship in Batangas. In addition to the shifts in kinship organisation, increased access to schooling, and direct effects of influxes of money through remittances already introduced, this thesis addresses significant changes in particular symbolic registers implicated in class affiliations, among them houses, language, travel, media consumption, religious practice and, of course, access to educational resources. There is a sizeable literature devoted to the ways in which transnational migrations and remittance economies can bring about changes in class structures in both diaspora, when middle-class Filipinos find themselves displaced from their class in Saudi Arabia (Johnson 2010); sending communities, when women’s elevation to the role of breadwinner upsets traditional gender and class roles in Kerala (George 2005); and even those in the process of becoming or temporarily transnational (Hannerz 1992; Werbner 1999). This literature exists alongside a strong tradition of work on how transnational migration forces a reconsideration of what constitutes an international working class (Portes & Walton 1981). This thesis is more closely concerned with how these global socio-economic systems manifest in the intimate politics of daily life in Batangas, and so I introduce here two topics that reflect this specificity, and inform many other elements of this thesis.

Well-established in anthropology of Southeast Asia as holding particular significances for status, reckonings of relatedness, and political power (Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995a), the construction of houses and acquisition of land is one crucial register. Anthropological interest in the significance of houses in 'sending communities' is also great (Fog-Olwig 2007; Aguilar et al 2009; Mand 2010), and in Palaw, where house-building paid for by remittances had blossomed since the early 1980s, a number of anxieties and political contestations around land, religion and political power had coalesced. By placing houses (and, as we shall see, their absences) within transnational flows of people and money, it also becomes necessary to place them within the dynamics of urbanism and ruralism within the Philippines. The contested modernities and class identities implicit in houses and the creation of 'urban' spaces in rural Batangas parallel those identified by other anthropological and geographical studies of emergent urban forms in Asia and elsewhere (McGee 1991; Champion & Hugo 2004; McGregor, Simon & Thompson 2004; Tremlett 2012). As with the effects of transnational migration, such new urbanisms also encourage new forms of relatedness, kinship, and organisation of households.

While houses are one prominent register of class and modernity in the Philippines, language is equally revealing. As in shown in the work of Vicente Rafael and T. Ruanni F. Tupas, the symbolism of both Spanish (Rafael 2006) and English held an important place within colonial class dynamics, and English's position as a 'lingua franca' of both the American education system and then the nation-state as a whole uniquely situated it in the cultural and class conflicts over the Philippines nation. The commandeering of language as a technology of governance by institutions of colonial and post-colonial rule (Tupas 2007; 2008) has cemented English as a signifier of elite identity, though through the popular use of the code-switching language 'Taglish', slang dialects and the difficulties of translation (Rafael 1995; 2015), its authority is slippery and conflicted. However, during an era of increasing transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, this specific history is beginning to intersect with a regional and global history of English language usage, symbolism and tuition. This moment of intersection has generated debate, about the Philippines' place within Asian modernity, considering the ways in which English has become com-

modified and deployed as a register of the nation-state's capacity for internationalism, liberalised trade, and cultural sophistication (Tupas 2009).

Throughout this thesis, the explorations of the changing relationships between infrastructure and superstructure in Batangas across a variety of arenas reinforce this thesis' principal means of addressing class: considering the role of the school, and position of young people within it. While this thesis' argument regarding the articulation of schooling to labour and to capital has been introduced already, I also cover how 'youth' (*kabataan*) as a category adopts a particular salience in the wake of interactions with new forms of modernity, such as that precipitated by the transnational remittance economy. In this strand of my argument I am addressing recent ethnography of youth and modernity, which has identified specific relationships between young people and emergent forms of consumption and social practice responsive to capital penetration (Bucholtz 2002; Liechty 2002; Green 2003; Lukose 2005). Throughout this thesis, I examine various youth repertoires of practice, exploring the significances of music, dance, literature, technology, language, socialisation, consumption, and so on.

The application of this literature in this thesis offers ways in which the abstract concept of futurity (Jenks 1996: 102) can be analysed and located ethnographically, and perhaps even considered to take on experiential and material significance in how these young people negotiate their economic relationships with kin and employers, and with their structural position within global labour markets. It thus also takes into account diverse ways of theorising the 'future', particularly focussing on work on the subject of aspiration (following Appadurai 2004). This argument also addresses other anthropological work concerned with the structural position of youth in late capitalism. Jennifer Cole and Deborah Durham's work laments a 'spatial bias' in the study of children and youth (2008: 5), and advocates a shift towards examining youth and childhood through temporal frameworks.

In Philippine studies of young people, children and their place in economies of migration, the trope of the 'left-behind' child of migrant parents has too often rendered children and

young people immobile in or absent from analysis and from accounts of cultural production, instead attaching great significance to concern over the morality of future generations. While this thesis seeks to offer a more thorough account of children and youth in the Philippines, I also draw on scholarship that incorporates the perspectives of young people more fully into ‘intergenerational’ kinds of enquiry. This relies upon a rich and diverse vein of anthropological insights into temporality and time (Bloch 1977; Gell 1992; Munn 1992; Bear 2014), and particularly ethnographic work that examines how people frame ideas of the life cycle and processes of separation and return (e.g. Massey et al 1990; Stafford 2000; Corbett 2007, 2009; Gardner 2008; Laoire 2008).

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 begins by contextualising contemporary articulations of Philippine schooling to the labour demands of international capital by providing a historical overview of the system’s foundation as a technology of the American colonial state. By comparing the aims of the earliest forays into Philippine schooling to the current government’s implicit emphasis on labour export, extraction of human capital, and competitiveness, I argue that there are functional consistencies in the outcomes and aims of schooling throughout the twentieth century, under various regimes, that persist in the present. After introducing the everyday routines of life at Palaw NHS, the chapter demonstrates ways in which competitiveness and globalism were becoming more instilled in both teachers’ and students’ understandings of their roles within the national education system, as well student’s expectations of what successful education meant.

While I introduce schooling as project of modernity in the Philippines in chapter 1 as well, in chapter 2 I expand on this theme, and present a wider contextualisation of the western Batangas polity. In turn, I examine contemporary practices of house construction in Palaw, their potentially uncanny properties, the class associations of teachers, and the intermingling of the economies of saints and remittances. I frame these discussions of modernity and class within questions of urbanism and neoliberalism and examine people’s responses to changing cultural forms.

In chapter 3, I describe a pageant competition that took place at Palaw NHS to pick the school's next Student Technologists and Entrepreneurs of the Philippines (STEP) representative. In analysing the performance of the students in the pageant, I argue that practices of pageantry in schools require contextualisation amongst other kinds of performance in the Philippines, and apply scholarship on other ironic and playful engagements with power. Specifically, I extract culturally specific usages of concepts of imitation from ethnographic material on beauty pageants to complicate a simplistic reading of the possible outcomes of schooling, and examine the position of English as a linguistic register across a number of different scenarios, including classrooms, political speeches, and in joking practices.

In chapter 4, the transmission of remittances into the public arena, via the charitable work of the Palaw Foundation Worldwide (PFW) and the Batangas Church Commission for Migrants (BCCM), demonstrates how money from work overseas is appropriated for particular societal ends. It is no coincidence that the PFW's primary focus is on education, and the BCCM's is on '*kabataan*' (youth), demonstrating not only an overlap between practices of migrations and schooling, but also the centrality of futurity to attempts by newly wealthy migrant to assert control over political discourse. Chapter 4 explores the 'moral landscape' of migration in Batangas and reflect upon how these trends within Philippines-based migration scholarship (as well as scholarship on youth) might be related both to state policy and middle-class anxieties surrounding social reproduction of families, children, and the Philippine nation-state.

In chapter 5, I explore the extent to which usage of the idiom of '*utang*' (discussed above) has retained its explanatory value in linking social organisation and kinship, but also suggest ways in which it can serve to mask other dynamics of responsibility and debt between kin, and between non-kin. Similarly, in this chapter the essentialist and culturally deterministic theories of 'Filipino psychology' are examined in relation to contemporary 'folk' theories of kinship and relatedness, and how people in Palaw and Santa Clara used them to make sense of their own 'affective work' in establishing friendship and kin relations. Specifically, I argue for an appreciation of how friendship relationships within the

peer grouping of the '*barkada*' and patronage relationships between children and adults might be better studied through an approach to kinship that focusses on the perspectives of young people, and incorporates theories of temporality into anthropological studies of youth.

Chapter 6 is concerned with how futures that involve travel or work overseas might be conceived, and the kinds of practice in the present that are likely - or perceived - to lead to them. It focusses on the ISA, where students expected to gain not just particular skills, but also attributes from their education there: consequently, the applicability of some graduates' aptitudes to particular niches in labour markets were emphasised. To explore the implications of the students' desires and their expressions at the school, I apply Sally Ann Ness' concept of the 'tourate', and Martin Manalansan's work on '*bakla*' sexuality to demonstrate how these attributes often employed essentialised, racialised notions of the capabilities of Filipinos, or of particular sexualities and genders, employing a complex accumulation of educational, historical and sexual capital to define the desired outcomes of schooling.

Finally, chapter 7 explores cases of young people who are already making contemporary migrations within the Philippines, but resists an argument that might classify them as 'prototypical' of future international migrations. Rather, I look into how *mobility* and encounters with 'the foreign' are expressed as desirable across a number of spheres, and might instead represent a more productive analytic angle from which to approach the apparent immanence of migration in the social experience of these young people. Here, I address how discourses of 'foreignness' as a quality of persons, institutions, materials and concepts in Batangas intersect with practices of departure and return - and their implied contact with alterity - and of migration from and within the Philippines.

Chapter 1

Competitiveness and Colonialism:

Learning and labour at Palaw National High School

Introduction

As of 2014, the Philippine public elementary and secondary education system teaches 20.92 million students (Philippine Statistics Authority 2014b)⁴ in 46,603 schools, and employs 501,683 teachers (Department of Education 2015a). It is run by the Department of Education (DepEd) through a bureaucratic apparatus that delegates much authority and budget control to province-level offices, and then further to municipalities and finally to school boards that control individual schools or groups of institutions (though any power granted usually only extends to organisation and administration rather than influence over curricula or systemic changes). While public schooling at the elementary and secondary level is entirely run by state administration (the Bureau of Elementary Education and the Bureau of Secondary Education), tertiary-level schooling is always more or less private, though educational standards and curricula are moderated by government bodies (the Technical Skills and Development Authority awards and authenticates some vocational qualifications and the Commission on Higher Education oversees universities).

The scale of the schooling system in the Philippines has been increased by continuous attempts throughout the twentieth century to provide universal public schooling to first the primary and then the secondary level. This perpetual policy has turned schools themselves into one of the most ubiquitous physical presences of the state in everyday life in the Philippines. Almost every *barangay* (neighbourhood) has a public elementary school, with most people also living near to a public high school. In larger towns, and even in smaller settlements, the public schooling system is supplemented by a range of non-state educational institutions: franchises of one of the many chains of vocational training centres, private enterprises employing a vogueish teaching method, Catholic schools at all levels (elementary to university) operating within their own extensive network, or smaller institutions affiliated with independent Protestant Churches. In this ‘educational milieu’,

the problem for an anthropologist of schooling was less to do with finding a suitable and willing field site, but picking which ones to limit myself to.

My choices of field sites, in the two schools in Palaw and Santa Clara, reflected a number of assumptions about the demographic composition and structural position of the Philippine education system at these different schools. While the role of the vocational college in encouraging students to consider overseas migration was highly explicit (see chapter 6), I was initially motivated by an interest in seeing how far back along the pathways of schooling one could find the incitement to migrate for work that I suspected to permeate throughout the Philippine education system. The intake of the two schools was distinct; Palaw National High School (NHS) enrolled students from a large number of very small rural communities and remote independent farmsteads, whereas the ISA student body was far more dispersed, mobile, urban, and often somewhat wealthier. The exact distinctions and articulations between the two institutions will become apparent throughout this thesis, as well as the ways in which they relate to each other and other institutions to contribute to the 'educational landscape' of western Batangas and the wider Philippines.

In this chapter, I will detail the everyday experience of students and teachers at Palaw NHS as a way of introducing the broader significance of schooling and 'education' in the Philippines. I also begin to outline the ways in which schooling in the Philippines operates in relation to (transnational) labour economies. This entails two strands of examination: First, a historical appraisal of how labour requirements of global capital and colonial and post-colonial governments have affected practices of schooling in the Philippines; second, a consideration of how, for the students, teachers and families in Palaw, the possibilities of schooling are entangled with a set of expectations regarding aspiration, prosperity, progress, national identity, and modernity. The ethnography I use in this chapter describes the ways in which justifications for attending, paying for, and supporting schooling rely heavily upon the promise of material prosperity, connected through the deployment of 'competitiveness'. Furthermore, the explicit ideological - but occasionally subtle - roles of teachers in perpetuating particular imaginations about the outcomes of schooling are also explored. In the context of the history of industrial schooling, export

economies, and colonial governance in the Philippines, I suggest this ethnographic material exposes a means by which colonial power is exercised in the Philippines - albeit fractionally - through control of labour.

Colonial Schooling and the Problem of Productivity

Histories of schooling in the Philippines often frame its trajectory in three major periods: Spanish, American, and post-independence. Before returning to contemporary schooling in Batangas, this section considers not only the differences between these periods, but also continuities in the governance and practice of schooling in the Philippines since the sixteenth century. I argue that one such continuity is the persistence of a logic of extraction, but an often confounded or hybridised attempt at it. This was due to Philippine schooling's tendency to fail (from the perspective of its administrators) to generate the expected kinds of valuable commodities and ideological outcomes. In 1634, the first interest in instituting public schooling in the Philippines was expressed by Felipe IV through royal decree, which ordered that the personnel of the Catholic Church present in the Philippines:

“...[D]irect all the Indians to be taught the Spanish language, and to learn in it the Christian doctrine, so that they may become more capable of the mysteries of our holy Catholic faith, may profit for their salvation, and obtain other advantages in their government and mode of living.”

(Blair & Robertson 1903, vol.XLV: 184)

The decree is not specific about what the “other advantages” might be, though one suggested was a beneficial suppression of idolatry (*ibid*: 185). The schools established in response to these decrees were, like many of the technologies of Spanish colonial governance, very patchy in their coverage, and were usually run independently of one another by different monastic orders (Fox 1965; May 1976: 136). However, these Church-run schools were consistent in their provision of catechistic education, in contrast to the schooling found in the academic institutions available to Spaniards in the Philippines throughout the colonial period (Schwartz 1971: 218; Calata 2002: 89). As these early de-

crees indicate that the primary - perhaps the sole - aim of this early edict on education is the conversion of the inhabitants of the Philippines islands to Catholicism how does this represent an example of extraction? To answer this question, it is necessary to consider not only what commodities the Spanish government in the Philippines did try to extract, but also then how they expressed their claim to political legitimacy.

As has been suggested by historical comparisons of the Philippines and other Spanish possessions in the Americas, the Philippine islands were seen as something of a disappointment economically. The primary economic activity in the islands over which the Spanish retained control and the capacity to extract wealth was an extensive trans-Pacific galleon trade carrying silver from Mexico to Manila, established in the sixteenth century (and operating until the early nineteenth century). This enabled the Spanish to trade with merchants carrying silk from China (Legarda 1955: 348) and spices and other textiles from India and Southeast Asia (Schurz 1918: 401). The colonial control over and interest in agriculture in the islands was negligible, despite their initial allure being the potential for spice cultivation. By the nineteenth century, Chinese, American, Dutch and British merchants had come to dominate Manila and other ports, and despite some successful agricultural cultivation of sugar, coffee, tobacco, coconuts, and abaca (Owen 1984: 42; 2001: 397; Rafael 2006: 7), Manila's position as a trade hub represented the extent to which the Spanish found the Philippines to be a profitable acquisition. The islands' "exploitative potential" was actively dismissed by colonial officials early on in the Spanish occupation, and instead, "the major argument in favour of retaining control over the Philippines was protecting the scope for missionary activity that it supposedly afforded the Spanish" (Bjork 1998: 34-35).

It is into this political economic environment that the project of Catholic schooling entered. Given the lack of valuable resources that the Spanish thought could be produced in the islands in the seventeenth century, the colonial project became one of geopolitical consolidation and maintenance of an increasingly unwieldy and declining empire (Wolf 1982: 119). To accomplish this, the state adopted a pre-existing apparatus of authority - the monastic mission present in the islands for almost seventy years prior to Felipe IV's

decree - to maintain a hierarchical relation between the 'Indians', the Spanish throne and, eventually, God (Rafael 1988: 147-154).⁵ Catholicism had spread quickly throughout the northern parts of the islands, and the architecture of the church became intertwined with their governance throughout the Spanish colonial period.

Indeed, religious authority underpinned Spanish imperialism in more direct ways too, exemplified by the '*requirimiento*', which was published in 1513. This edict was utilised to justify doctrinally the Spanish conquests of the Americas and later the Philippines, and establish the religious case for imperial expansion by demanding the conversion of people in the 'barbarous nations'. But 'the requirement' did not solely rest upon the conquered inhabitants of the new Spanish colonies. Rather, the Spanish themselves were in the process of unburdening themselves of a divine edict: a 'requirement' from God to save souls. In this sense, the conversion of people in the Philippines islands represents an extraction - an 'extraction' of souls for the purposes of manufacturing political and legal legitimacy, which could be deployed to reinforce Spanish dominion over the economic boons of colonialism, both in the Philippines and elsewhere.

By the nineteenth century, however, privately established educational institutions, some founded by Filipinos, had begun to exist alongside the Church schooling system (Schwartz 1971: 210), and anti-clerical nationalism provided an ideological home for the push for broader reforms of the education system such as secularisation (Schumacher 1975: 63). While these political movements were cultivated by the indigenous *ilustrado* class, educated at the Catholic universities in the latter stages of Spanish control of the Philippines, an 1863 decree bringing non-elite, indigenous laypeople into the teaching profession also opened up new instances of resistance and demands for change (Concepcion 2014: 10). The extrication of Catholic influence over schooling was a dominant theme of American reforms in the twentieth century as well, and indeed extends into current constitutional assurances of the separation of religion and schooling (Milligan 2003: 487-488). However, the missionary impetus that motivated the establishment of Catholic schooling by the Spanish was far from alien to, and in some senses informed the American colonial period's own logics of extraction in relation to education.

A salient characteristic of the American colonial educational policy in the early years of the twentieth century was that it was highly inconsistent. Initially, attempts at reconstructing the schooling system post-war were almost entirely improvised by the military. Consequently, there was great continuity between the American military operation and the initial project of imperial government, so much so that an editorial in *Science* characterised the different stages of annexation as a military invasion followed by an educational invasion (1912: 397). As described by John M. Gates, mere months after the American occupation of Manila in 1898, a Protestant pastor travelling with the military had been tasked with reforming and rebuilding the city's schools, abolishing the Catholic curriculum and employing teachers, often drawing from American army personnel (1973: 61). Gates' overtly apologetic history of American armed forces' further involvement in the early construction of a schooling system is perhaps over-zealous its account of Filipinos' enthusiasm for the soldiers teaching them English from tin can labels, but it does demonstrate the American military's awareness of the power of merely building schools in an environment in which public education had become a cause célèbre of the independence movement (*ibid*: 86-88). The army's schools did not reflect a coherent policy, however, and the somewhat haphazard and improvised birth of a new education system in the Philippines by the military in many ways predicted the divided and often confused unfolding of the colonial schooling system over the next decade.

As the colonial government began to assemble greater administrative control, more formal attempts at education policy were initiated. In 1900, the newly-formed Education Bureau was tasked by President McKinley with establishing a schooling system for the Philippines, and led by a schoolteacher named Fred Atkinson took the first significant steps towards this aim later that year. The 'Thomasites' - a group of 1,000 teachers from the United States, named after the ship (the U.S.S. Thomas) aboard which more than half of them arrived in the Philippines - were hired by the colonial administration to begin this process, and by the end of 1901 had been dispersed throughout the country (May 1976: 143-144).

The first inclination of the education reformers on their acquisition of an entirely new territory (and workforce) was to explore the Philippines for its exploitative potential. Of great concern was the extent to which Filipinos could be useful and productive, and for answers the administration drew on existing educational policy that existed for the education of black (Coloma 2009) and Native American (Paulet 2007) populations in the United States. American government formulations of racial difference established these three groups (Filipinos, Native Americans and black Americans) as comparable due to their equivalence as 'dependent' or inferior races. As Anne Paulet writes regarding the colonial encounter in the Philippines: "the United States discovered, at the turn of the century, that 'Indians' also lived overseas and that, just like those at home, they needed to be properly educated in the American way of life" (2007: 174).

Throughout the first few years of the twentieth century, Atkinson placed great emphasis on the economic and labour outcomes of schooling in both the United States and in the Philippines through the application of 'industrial education' (May 1976: 147; Keller 1994: 45). He was also highly sceptical about the value of 'higher learning' to the Filipinos: "In this system we must beware the possibility of overdoing the matter of higher education and unfitting the Filipino for practical work ... the education of the masses here must be an agricultural and industrial one" (quoted in May 1976: 150).

Unfortunately for Atkinson's attempt to configure the curriculum to provide productive workers, the aims of the American colonial project shifted during the early years of the twentieth century. Atkinson's own apparent refusal of the capacity for Filipinos to do anything other than manual labour eventually clashed with the growing political consensus that Filipinos should be guided towards self-governance and democracy: "What seems to have been lacking in Atkinson was a belief in the possibility of the Filipino to be improved and become participatory in the democratic society envisioned by the Americans. Indeed, even after leaving the Philippines, Atkinson would declare that the Filipinos were 'incapable of self-government'" (Paulet 2007: 186).

Atkinson was eventually dismissed in 1902. Under his successor, David Barrows, the colonial administration turned its attention to the project of democratisation and civilisation, instead of attempting to institute a project of social engineering that could turn the Philippines into an agro-industrial powerhouse. It thus became more concerned with the moral impacts of colonialism upon the Philippines, and the United States. The most common discursive articulation of this came through the rhetoric of 'benevolent assimilation' whereby invasion was justified domestically and internationally through promises of civilisation and progress for the Filipino people, eventually towards becoming 'Americans' themselves, and thus capable of self-government (Ileto 1999: 21; Go 2000: 334). The idea was to follow Jeffersonian ideals of creating a learned and wise citizenry, a process that hinged (in practice) upon insisting upon English as the means of both tuition and public discourse (Rafael 2015: 2), as this would allow the fostering of a public commons deemed essential to self-government (Newlands 1905: 937).

But political tutelage also involved the creation of an American 'style' of political economy. The sensibilities of the American administration had been offended by the clerical dominance of the Spanish era, and it also took issue with the way in which *mestizo* (those of mixed Filipino and Spanish descent) elites were seen to be politically parasitic, seldom acting in the interest of 'the people'. Some schools even conducted classes that taught against the landlord-tenant organisation of agricultural land (Margold 1995: 379). The elites were still required, though, to be the students of the American 'political tutelary' project and to keep the ignorant masses in check. The liberal governmentality that the early process of 'democratisation' attempted to entrench confronted this contradiction by insisting upon the adoption of the politics of the early administrators, who were in the "Northeastern, urban Progressivist mould which conceived of legal-rational reforms as the best means by which to realise proper democratic governance" (Go 1997: 51). Fundamental to this kind of reform was the establishment of local government that resembled idealised forms of early *American* colonial polities, and even included a drive to encourage 'homesteading' and the internal migration of populations to agricultural 'frontiers' in Mindanao and elsewhere through, amongst other policies, standardisation of land rights (Owen 2001: 398).

However by the end of the decade, a secular, liberal political economy of townships organising a population of independent homesteaders had not successfully materialised. More importantly, the emancipatory ideals of the education system were soon also forced to bend to economic and bureaucratic imperatives. As the administrative burden of running a colony increased, so did the need for clerical staff: “[t]he system was designed to turn Filipinos into Americans; but they did not become Americans; they became clerks” (Furnivall 2001: 435-436). Enthusiasm was expiring for the ‘political tutelage’ that some had hoped would stimulate a liberal and self-sufficient economy, and as schooling in practice became more vocational, the attraction of industrial education returned. While in 1902 Fred Atkinson was sacked for his narrow-minded view of Filipinos’ capacity for higher learning, by 1913 James A. Robertson, then one of the most senior librarians in the Philippines, was adamant that “[s]pecial stress is being laid on industrial training, for it has been seen that pure classical training is out of place here in the majority of schools. The Filipino has long been famous for his manual dexterity, and with proper training this can be turned to rich account” (1913: 473). The circle of educational policy had turned: “in less than a decade American policy shifted from ‘industrial education,’ which attempted to produce a disciplined workforce through manual and vocational training, to ‘literary’ education, designed to create a Jeffersonian yeomanry, and then back again” (Owen 1982: 424).

Roland Coloma’s work parallels that of Paulet’s, in that it considers the way in which the unifying ‘savagery’ of black and Native Americans and Filipinos was employed to justify colonial educational policy in the Philippines and paternalistic schooling programs in the United States. However, he also describes how throughout the 1900s, the racial logic of educational policy in the Philippines persisted even while schools gave up on their efforts to civilise students, and instead began to attempt to create particular kinds of worker: “The prevailing U.S. racial understanding and the dominance of manual-industrial training for African Americans in the early 1900s underpinned the curriculum transformation in the Philippines from a liberal arts foundation to one geared toward manual-industrial training” (Coloma 2009: 506). This vocational approach to education policy focussed on teaching manual skills in preparation for futures in particular jobs, and emphasised the

position of education within a productive economy. The practical outcomes of this shift meant a change in the classrooms: lessons began to be included on using tools and deploying modern agricultural methods for the boys, and housekeeping for the girls (Coloma 2009: 513).

But this final attempt to crudely instrumentalise schooling as a means to economic productivity also encountered contradictions. The racial profiles that suggested suitable economic niches (i.e. intellectually unchallenging manual labour) for the Filipino populace were not original, nor did they unsubtly pigeonhole Filipinos into manual labour, as Atkinson might have liked. A 1736 report by the Spanish colonial administration on ‘public instruction’ advises that “everything which contributes to the propagation of the teaching of industries ... ought to be encouraged ... [the natives of that country] are extremely skilful in all the imitative arts and crafts, rather than for the studies which demand the employment of the superior faculties of the intelligence” (Blair & Robertson 1903, vol.XLV: 303). Blair and Robertson, writing for an audience of American colonial administrators, footnote this passage with a comment that “industrial training ... is one of the needs that has been most apparent to the American authorities since 1898” (*ibid*).⁶

In this passage, we find a suggestion about the particular specialisations of (specifically ‘lowland’⁷) Filipinos - their capacity for the “imitative arts and crafts” - that has proved historically resilient. Fenella Cannell has argued, using Webb Keane’s insights into Protestant selfhood and modernity (2002), that the American schooling project (indeed, the entire colonial enterprise) was animated by a concern over the ‘sincerity’ of Philippine action. Lowland Filipinos, by showing (from an American perspective) a knack for performance, imitation, copying, emulation - in short, insincerity - appeared too quick to “capitulate and surrender the boundaries of the self, which produced a profound unease in the mind accustomed to Protestant ideas of personal authenticity” (2005: 174). These perceived traits fostered a view that lowland Filipinos lacked any culture whatsoever and were merely capable of callowly adopting whatever other cultures they interacted with (Cannell 1999: 241-242).

The effect of lowland Filipinos' 'imitativeness' - the inauthentic connotations that Cannell demonstrates render the term analytically problematic in the Philippines - on how Americans decided they needed to approach schooling and productivity was to confuse it: it showed how uneasy the lurch back to industrial schooling and its anticipated productive effects had been. This effect is discernible through the way in which the Philippines was presented to audiences in the United States and elsewhere by the colonial administration. At the 1915 Panama-Pacific exhibition,⁸ the then Director of Education Frank L. Crone (a successor of Atkinson) had organised a display and sale of both natural commodities such as coconuts, oils, and forest products, and 'crafted' goods such as hats, needlework, and carvings produced by schoolchildren, all designed to demonstrate the Philippine islands' (and the public schooling system's) potential productive output (Cannell 2005: 177-178; Kramer 2006: 376-377). Such an array of objects points, says Cannell, to a belief amongst the Americans that large-scale mass-production in the Philippines was untenable, and instead the form of saleable commodity that could be produced by those trained in the schools were artisanal, 'hand-made' craft works.

The 'industrial' schooling project at this point had appeared to settle on a means by which the exploitative potential of the Philippines could be realised. A 1912 report in *Science* on the manufacture of woven goods in a classroom indicated this view of the extraction of value from Philippine products: "schools do not attempt to replace hand machinery with modern apparatus, for it is recognised that there is a real demand for the products of careful hand workmanship" (Science, Editorial 1912: 396). This understanding of the articulation of schooling to the manufacture of commodities led to some somewhat bizarre proclamations from Frank R. White, then Director of Philippine Education: "The Bureau of Education at Manila considers it one of its legitimate functions to give such training in the making of good hats as will afford a large number of children a permanent means of livelihood" (*ibid*).

However, in the case of 'lowland'-produced goods, American beliefs about the cultural vacuity of the manufacturers meant that the kind of authenticity or personality necessary to render 'hand-made' items valuable was also absent: looking at what had been pro-

duced, American observers were underwhelmed by their originality and lack of uniqueness. The failure of these objects, Cannell argues, represented - for the colonial administration - a failure of the Filipinos who made them “to demonstrate the required transformation from ‘culture’ into modernity” (Cannell 2005: 179).

Where the Spanish found the islands to be barren of resources, in part because of their false assumption about the commodity niches it would occupy within an emergent world system, the Americans failed to effectively commodify and export ‘Philippine’ products because of their own preconceptions about Filipinos’ productive capacities, both of economic value and cultural value. The anxiety felt by the Americans over the failure of extraction also reflected a failure - again - of the education system: even the subtler plans to specialise and adapt industrial education to racial disposition were unsuccessful.

However, the explicit lack of success of the attempt to create an economy based on artisanal manufacturing did not mean that colonial schooling policy had no historical effect. Though the effectiveness and activity of the American colonial government can be overstated (Owen 2001: 396), in a similar way to the Spanish adoption of the missionary movement as its political arm, the American colonial government would come to heavily depend upon schools as mediator of the state and the means of asserting governmental authority, to the extent that it is possible to consider the entire American colonial project as ‘tutelary’ (Kramer 2006: 201, 311). This being said, throughout the latter American colonial period, the explicit ‘industrialisation’ of the classroom was mostly written out of histories. By 1945, it was possible to state once again that the purpose of American schooling programs in the Philippines had *always* been to establish the educational prerequisites of civil society, democracy, and self-governance, and that an orientation to labour within the curriculum existed only as an attempt “to inculcate a respect for and knowledge of ... useful work” (Smith 1945: 140-141).

One area in which the conscious articulation of education and labour continued to impact the Philippines was through the orientation of the economy (through industrial schooling and other means) beyond the borders of the Philippines.⁹ As Coloma hints: “by relying on

foreign external markets for Filipino/a labour and products, a culture of dependency was created, a condition that remains to haunt the Philippines to this day” (2009: 513). This is a reference not only to the reliance the Philippines now has on transnational employment, of which the United States, as I will show below, provided the prototypical form; but also to the ways in which the Philippines is beholden financially to the United States through its unsustainable indebtedness to the World Bank (Tadiar 2004: 42; Qin et al. 2006).

To trace the connection between early twentieth-century schooling policy and the contemporary economic relations of the Philippines, it is necessary to consider the ways in which American colonialism contributed to the geopolitical and economic circumstances that have catalysed mass migrations from the Philippines. The first major ‘flow’ from the Philippines to the United States was spurred by organised recruitment of Filipino agricultural workers for employment in Hawaii, by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA). The number of ‘*sakadas*’ (sugar croppers) coming to work increased steadily every year¹⁰ throughout the American colonial period, totalling about 120,000 arrivals between 1906 and 1935 (Fujita-Rony 2003: 84). Hawaii also represented a ‘stopping-off’ point for migrations to the American west coast, and by the late 1920s many had moved to the mainland. In 1930, roughly 45,000 Filipino nationals were reported working on the mainland, and around 82% had continued to work in the agricultural sector, now predominantly on citrus and vegetable farms (Hing 1994: 34-35).

The HSPA’s efforts were the first attempts at formal labour export but, because they targeted agricultural workers, did not represent an explicit attempt to train Filipino workers for labour overseas. Although explicit policies of this kind were unusual until the latter half of the twentieth century (see below), the formalisation and professionalisation of labour export under American rule did occur, most notably regarding training of nurses to cover shortfalls in the United States. Catherine C. Choy’s work presents a detailed history of the training and migration of nurses from the twentieth-century Philippines, beginning with ‘exchange visitor programs’ to the United States (2003: 61).¹¹ The educational institutions of American colonialism and subsequent nurse migrations are linked because the former established vital preconditions for the latter, including the idealisation of Ameri-

can work and academic experience, English language fluency (see also Ishi 1987; Ong & Azores 1994) and gendered notions of nursing as ‘women’s work’ that made racially feminised Filipinos eminently suitable for it (Choy 2003: 41). Most importantly, the nurse exchange programs offered the opportunity for nurses on educational placements to work in American hospitals, earn pay in dollars, and subsequently attempt to stay in the United States (Brush 1995). In 1973, Ferdinand Marcos finally made explicit the policy of ‘nurse export’ (Choy 2003: 114-117), but by this time the migration of nurses sat amongst the deliberate export of many other different classes of skilled worker.

In this way, nurse migration came to form a ‘prototype’ for further migrations - more so than the Hawaiian *sakadas* - by establishing institutional, socioeconomic and cultural ties between general notions of education, professionalism, and labour migration in the Philippines (Choy 2003: 51), and by reinforcing feminised representations of Filipinos in America.¹² The strength of Choy’s analysis is that it attributes the flow of nurses overseas not only to an accidental labour surplus in the sending country, but also to the historical creation of the flow itself, including the hegemonic effects that cause so many Filipinos to become nurses in the first place. Though Choy limits her study to the ‘production’ of nurses, my aim in this chapter - and throughout this thesis - is to explore whether there are symbolic or ideological commonalities across the training, employment, and export of different professions from the Philippines that are not unique to nurses, and thus have an analytic value beyond that particular history. In other words, the next sections of this chapter will return to Batangas in order to explore how the history of American colonial schooling might still render its effects, and whether these effects can be characterised as hidden curriculum orienting Filipino students towards particular kinds of labour.

Palaw National High School

Of the four public high schools in its mostly rural municipality, Palaw NHS is the biggest (with roughly 600 students and 20 teachers), most prominent in public life (through student involvement in civic works and local projects) and best endowed financially (thanks to its size and public engagement). Built in 2006, its purpose was to extend the coverage of public schooling beyond the more populated southern parts of the municipality that

were catered for by the schools closest to the main road from the coast. Although the school is very close to the town and attracted a number of students who lived in the settlement itself, the largest proportion of students came from Mataywanac, a large rural *barangay* that extended north towards the mountains in Cavite. Although there was an elementary school in the *barangay* prior to the construction of the high school, for families who lived in one of the most remote parts of the province secondary education was unfeasible. Indeed, so far away were the most distant households, and so poor were the roads connecting them to Palaw, that some students (and one or two teachers) had to travel up to two hours each way, every day, in order to attend school.

Consequently, secondary school attendance was far from universal, and many students' experiences of schooling were somewhat intermittent. Davin, the second eldest son of a farming household in Mataywanac, had enrolled at Palaw NHS in 2010, but had attended for less than a year as his father ordered him to work assisting harvest crews loading sugar cane onto trucks. He had re-enrolled in 2012, but now that his younger brother was also approaching high school age, he might have to give up his place in order for his family to afford to send his brother instead. Davin was not particularly bothered by this: he didn't care much for schooling as it was tiring (*nakapapagod*) having to sit through lessons and travel over an hour to school each day (he was often late), and he wanted to become a driver instead. He still thought that he would be able to graduate at some point, but also made the point that his elder brother, who worked for a bus company, was able to support his family regardless of his educational achievements. However, the fact that Davin's family persisted with sending him and his siblings to school (and they kept coming, albeit with rare incidences of truancy), despite the expectation that their schooling would be partial, is indicative of the belief in and commitment to schooling in Batangas. In the face of such challenges for students attending school, there were not, as far as I knew, any students of school age in Palaw who had not at some point attended some form of schooling. The ubiquity of elementary schools, especially, and the fact that younger children's attendance represented less of a cost to household labour, meant that everyone at least attended school from the ages of 5-10.

Palaw NHS itself is situated on the long road heading northeast from the town, into the rural *barangay* that sit between the mountains and the main road coming from the coast. The school is only ten minutes' walk from the town, but usually when I arrived I was hot and sticky thanks to having to climb the steep hill inside the school grounds. The school comprises three large buildings on top of the hill, surrounded by a tall concrete wall and sugar fields beyond. The grounds are sealed shut most of the time by a heavy metal gate, watched over by an armed guard. Inside the walls there is a wide grassy area on the slopes that lead up to the main building and a basketball court partway down the hill at the end of the driveway. An elevated covered stage made of concrete looks over the basketball court, and is decorated by a large mural - sponsored by DepEd and prominently sporting their logo - depicting an idyllic vista of waterfalls and tropical flowers.

The school buildings' interiors differed depending on the age of the building: there were two older buildings and one newer, two-storey block. The oldest cluster contained the classrooms for the youngest grades - students aged 11-13 - as well as the library, kitchen and canteen area. Next to the basketball court and attached to the stage, were the science lab and one more classroom - part of the older constructions. Inside these the clean finished concrete on the floor kept the temperature relatively cool, but there was no air conditioning, save for two or three fans in each classroom and an absence of glass in the windows to allow the breeze in.¹³ In the newer building, the rooms were a little smaller but had cleaner white tiles and fresh paint on the walls. Each class had roughly sixty wooden desk-chairs, though for the newer classrooms some of these were plastic. Whilst the windows lacked glass, they were covered by metal bars to secure the computers in the IT lab. In each classroom, the desks were split into two sections - one side for girls, one for boys - with a walkway down the centre. At the back of the room, the teacher's desk was surrounded by filing cabinets and bookshelves with the textbooks relevant to their subject.

During my time in Palaw, I aimed to spend as many days as possible at the school. A typical day would begin at 6:30am, though the teachers would get there an hour earlier. The streets of the town, and especially the road to the school that led out of Palaw would fill

with schoolchildren, walking or spilling out of *jeepneys* and trikes. Both boys and girls wore white shirts, but the boys had black trousers and the girls red and white checked skirts, with a tie in the same colour. Once inside the gate (that would be closed before class so as to catch latecomers, whose names the guard would note down) the students would assemble on the basketball court and line up according to their grade and class.

The school day would begin with the national anthem and then with a song and accompanying aerobic dance routine in which everyone, including the teachers, participated. The well-rehearsed student government members would lead the school in the routine from the stage, and while the songs selected for this changed each term, necessitating a new dance routine, the genre was always upbeat and wholesome pop, and lyrical content seldom strayed from themes of the importance of education, enthusiasm for attending classes, and the love students should feel for their teachers and their school. The ideological content was not considered important or particularly effective in teachers' and students' explanations for these performances, and most would describe their purpose as "*pagsasanay*" (exercise). The vigour with which the students danced and the volume of their singing was only half-heartedly policed by nearby teachers and tended to diminish the further one travelled from the stage, and the further we got from the beginning of term.¹⁴

Most schools, and all the public schools I visited in the Philippines, would conduct at least one performance of the national anthem every day, and while students (and, indeed, teachers) tended to enjoy learning dance routines and songs recreationally, this additional exercise was unusual and unpopular due to its repetitiveness. Suitably stimulated, students and teachers then dispersed to their classes, which would begin at 7am. The students would make their way up from the court to the main buildings, removing their shoes at the entrance to the school buildings. Each class contained about sixty students, and had one room allocated to it, in which the students would remain all day. The teachers, after beginning the day with their own class, would move from class to class to teach their specialist subject for seven periods throughout the day. There was a fifteen-minute

morning break at 10:00am, forty-five minutes for lunch at 11:30am, with classes finishing at 3:30pm.

Students would spend break times socialising, snacking or playing. If it wasn't too hot, boys would play basketball on the court, and students would scatter around the school grounds into shady corners to chat. Younger students chased each other and played in the trees, but the older students, including most of the class I attached myself to, would stay indoors in the shade and within range of the electric fans. They would play music on their mobile phone speakers, play games of chess, gossip, and joke. Occasionally they would be allowed to get out a guitar belonging to one of the teachers. Many students also spent their breaks working on extra-curricular projects, such as administration for the school government, upcoming shows or performances, or for the various student clubs. A popular choice was the computer club that granted students supervised and limited access to the school computers.

Snacking and taking meals also occupied students during breaks. Students would bring food prepared at home into school, always consisting of rice and usually a meat or fish accompaniment such as pork *adobo*, beef *kaldareta* (both types of stew), or a piece of *bangus* (milkfish), though children from wealthier families would often have been given other *meryenda* (afternoon snacks), such as candy, pastries, or sweet bread. Students known for regularly being in possession of such treats would attract a small crowd as they opened their bags at the start of break time, come under pressure from their friends to share out their bounty. The redistribution and sharing of food was commonplace but masked the fact that a number of students (the fourth-year teachers estimated that this applied to about 20% of the class) did not always bring food; instead they had been given a large breakfast (also rice), that was supposed to last them the entire day. Teachers usually had to buy a small portion of rice for at least one student every week to mediate some students' hunger.

Students could also buy more food from a small canteen serving snacks, sweets and drinks. At break time, students would throng around it to buy *buko* juice (sweetened, di-

luted immature coconut water with shredded coconut strands), *taho* (sugar syrup and ice), small plastic bags of spaghetti, *kikiam* (squid balls) and other snack food. The *kantina* was run by two women from the *barangay* who had been invited by one of the teachers. While they paid a small fee to ‘rent’ the concrete pavilion where they prepared and served the food, they were always keen to let me know that their ‘best customers’ (*pinakamagalang suki*) were in the high school (compared to the patrons of their *sari-sari*, or convenience, stores in the neighbouring village).

The curriculum centred on science, mathematics and English, but included substantial time for IT and technology, Filipino language, ‘values education’ (citizenship, religion and ethics) and a selection of humanities and social sciences, usually history and economics. A small amount of time each week was also given over to arts and music, physical education and health classes. I will discuss the content of the curriculum and how it was taught in more detail in chapter 3, though this aspect of schooling practice is less central to students’ experience and my argument than it might first appear. The short recreational breaks afforded to the students by their timetable suggest an intensive schedule of study, but one of the striking things about the everyday routine of the school was how little time students spent doing conventional, curricular schoolwork. It was common for lessons to end with work incomplete, for a number of reasons: teachers would be overburdened with administrative work and so would turn up late; there would not be enough textbooks to go around, so some students would simply not do the classwork; or the collective interest of the class would wane to the point that the teacher would stop attempting to retain their attention.

The long school day and time-consuming commute that both teachers and students had to make to get school meant that energy and patience were scarce resources. As the music teacher Mr Reynald¹⁵ once explained over lunch in his classroom, “*Tapos ng nagtuturo ngayon kasi ang mga estudyante ay pagod, at ginulo. ‘Di silang makikinig sa hapon, kaya talaga magturo kami sa umaga lang, kapag sila’y masigasig*” (We’ve finished teaching now because the students are tired, distracted. They won’t listen in the afternoon, so really we only teach in the morning, when they’re enthusiastic). This approach to the organi-

sation of the school day represented something of a consensus among the students too, many of whom referred to the afternoon periods as the '*mabagal*' (slow) classes. The inconsistent nutrition experienced by students (discussed above) had a noticeable impact on their concentration levels as the day progressed. Further to this point, the after-lunch 'slowdown' was supposedly caused by a combination of the heat and either feeling '*bussog*' (full) after the midday meal or tired from the lack of a decent one.

The widespread disillusionment with the ineffectiveness of half of the teaching schedule contradicts the fact that students and teachers maintained that attending the whole school day still had an instructional effect, other than just consuming time; indeed, truancy was rigorously policed and severely punished by the teachers and the school guard. This apparent gap prompted the question: in what other ways, besides classroom teaching, were students at Palaw NHS being instructed? What was going on at the school when teaching was not? Answering these questions can begin with the well-trodden sociological step of exploring the existence of a 'hidden curriculum' (Durkheim 1925; Jackson 1968; Bowles & Gintis 1976; Dreeben 1976; Anyon 1980; Giroux 1983), a discussion of which demands an expansion of the definition of schooling practices to incorporate the "purpose of social education beyond its limited explicit instructional outcomes" (Giroux & Penna 1979: 21).

Though a term with wider currency in sociology than anthropology, the concept is in many ways foundational to anthropological accounts of schooling, which tend to contextualise schooling in relation to other social institutions, often blurring the boundaries between culture in schools and in the wider social world (Levinson & Holland 1996: 2). Similarly, the intimate emphases of anthropological research have also led to attempts to place the relationships generated by school-based pedagogy within wider social pedagogies, consequently demonstrating the ways in which particular relations of social hierarchy can be rehearsed and (re)produced in interactions amongst students and between teachers and students (e.g. Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Willis 1977), or how schooling practices rely upon wider cultural understandings of identity (Reed-Danahay 1996) or emotion (Bénéï 2008).

Academic study of ‘hidden curricula’ and critical pedagogy in the Philippines still refer somewhat uncritically to the work of mid-twentieth-century nationalist scholarship; in particular Renato Constantino’s influential essay, ‘The Mis-education of the Filipino’ (1959) (Rafael 2015: 3). In it, Constantino considers the ‘hidden curriculum’ under the American colonial regime and the post-independence government to be anti-nationalistic and a means of perpetuating colonial power over the Philippines: “from its inception, the educational system of the Philippines was a means of pacifying a people ... The introduction of the American educational system was a subtle means of defeating a triumphant nationalism” (1970: 21). The nationalist concerns of Constantino have been preserved in much progressive and activist scholarship that has critiqued the encroachment of ‘neoliberal’ ideology into public education policy, framing trends such as corporatisation, privatisation, increasing public-private disparities and labour export orientation of schooling as symptomatic of existing and renewed colonial governance by the United States and other foreign interests (e.g. Lumbera, Guillermo & Alamon (eds.) 2007).

A further influence on critical pedagogy in the Philippines comes from the scholarship of Paulo Freire (1970, 1985; Cortez 2013) whose work is also foundational to other strands of critical education studies, particularly those engaged with educational and schooling practices in postcolonial contexts. Works inspired by Freire which focus on Philippine pedagogy are still usually nationalist in aim, though such work seeks to build the theoretical tools for a critical engagement with schooling practices, and even concoct a ‘Filipinised’ (Viola 2009; 2014) critical pedagogy. Such attempts note both the ‘saturation’ of the educational sphere within the Philippines and Filipinos’ increasing transnationalism and exposure to schooling as a technology of governance that in many ways exceeds the state. These projects therefore often offer both an internationalist and nationalist critique, advocating, for example, the promotion of a ‘Pinay’ praxis that can “develop the capacity of Pinays to confront global [and] local ... problems that face them and their community” (Tintiangco-Cubales & Sacramento 2009: 180). In this way the postcolonial critiques of Freire are deployed to address some of the same problems Constantino identified.

While these branches of nationalist critical pedagogy are legitimate and suggest productive avenues of inquiry, my concern in this chapter is not *solely* to consider the ways in which a ‘true’ but ‘hidden’ curriculum was being pushed by the teachers and accepted by students at Palaw NHS. This would not reflect the fact that, as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, most students, teachers and parents already routinely saw through what might be called the ‘explicit instructional outcomes’ of schooling, such as the ‘content standards’ provided by DepEd curriculum guidelines (I discuss such instances of critique later in this chapter). However, if we accept the critique - suggested by the anthropological and critical literatures discussed above - that schooling *can* implicitly attempt to reproduce existing social and political relations, it is necessary to ask which relations a ‘hidden curriculum’ might be reproducing in the contemporary Philippines. The next section offers an answer to this question.

Comparison, Competitiveness and Aspiration

Towards the end of my fieldwork, a large-scale reform (known as ‘K to 12’) of teaching standards, grade organisation and curriculums was undertaken and had begun to be implemented. A principal drive behind this reform was an attempt to make the education system more closely resemble what are considered to be international standards for education. On their website, under the question “why are we now implementing 12 years of basic education?”, DepEd gave this answer: “The Philippines is the last country in Asia and one of only three countries worldwide with a 10-year pre-university cycle (Angola and Djibouti are the other two). A 12-year program is found to be the best period for learning under basic education. It is also the recognised standard for students and professionals globally” (Department of Education 2015b).

Expressed here is a collection of anxieties over similarities between years of schooling in the Philippines and in other poor countries in the ‘global south’ and over the need to keep up with Asian neighbours (see also Okabe 2013: 10). There is nothing else offered in answer to this question: these reasons are enough to motivate the adoption of this aspect of the policy. Dissenting voices, while criticising the continuing lack of resources available for parts of the curriculum - such as science - that require equipment and laboratory mate-

rials, also cannot avoid comparison between the Philippines' education system and those of its neighbours: "Unless ... the lack of teachers and facilities, commercialisation and state neglect are addressed, science and math competencies of the Filipino children would keep on lagging behind our neighbours. This should also be tied to the needs of a domestic industrial economy. Sadly, the lack of national industries only perpetuates the thinking that education is solely for the needs of the 'global' players" (Tapang 2015).

Teachers, students and parents in Batangas also held this concern. Jesusa, in whose house I was offered accommodation throughout my stay in Palaw, had worked in Japan for several years in the 1980s and 1990s, had married a Japanese man and had two children. Her teenage son lived in Japan with his father, and attended Japanese public school, while her younger daughter Akari, aged 10 at the beginning of my fieldwork, lived in Palaw with her. Jesusa was adamant about the superior quality of Japanese schools, evidenced especially by her understanding of their better facilities, such as computers, multiple textbooks for every student, and classrooms that were big enough for fifty students, but that only had twenty. She recalled that the schools in Japan when she lived there looked cleaner and bigger than schools in the Philippines.

During my fieldwork, Jesusa and Akari were trying to return to Japan to live with the rest of their family, Jesusa's main motivation for this being the need to ensure a good education for her daughter. Meanwhile, she had been enrolled at a Kumon school in Santa Clara for supplementary lessons. Kumon is an internationally successful network of private schools, founded in Japan in the 1950s, and advocates what it calls an 'individualised' learning method. Akari studied English and mathematics at the school two days per week for a tuition fee of PHP1800 per month (about £25). Despite the expense, Jesusa was a convert to the value of their teaching style thanks to Akari's own positive comparisons between her Kumon classes and those at her regular school (a private Catholic elementary school in Palaw) and to her confidence that 'Japanese education' (*Hapong edukasyon*) practiced a distinct (but somewhat ineffable) style of education. When I probed her about what she thought made the Kumon school better, her response was a shrug: "*iba na lang, mabuti lang*" (its just different, just better).¹⁶

A more expansive explanation for the value of foreign education systems was given to me by one of the students at Palaw NHS. Gloria was a 15-year-old student at the high school who lived in the Palaw *poblasyon*, was planning to apply to study computer science at college in Batangas City, and was likely to get the grades and the monetary support from a wealthy uncle that would allow her to pursue this. But she was unimpressed by what she thought a degree from the Philippines would be worth. She explained: “*Kasi, may kaugnayan yung edukasyon sa abroad, talaga, lalo na sa Singapore at Korea. Walang bagong titser sa Pilipinas, karamihan sa mga titser ay hindi maaaring magturo sa atin tungkol sa mundo*” (Because, education overseas is actually relevant, especially in Singapore and Korea. In the Philippines there are no new teachers, and most teachers can’t teach us about the world). Here, ‘*tungkol sa mundo*’ (about the world) refers not only to a kind of international cosmopolitanism and applicable worldliness or ‘*nous*’ (also indicated by her reference to ‘*kaugnayan*’ - relevance), but also to literal knowledge about other countries. Gloria was undecided about her aspirations to work overseas, but she was sure she wanted to study somewhere abroad, to get access to this higher quality of education.¹⁷

These reflections on the problems with education and the need for reform demonstrate, I argue, a continuation of the orientation of schooling overseas. However, the object of desire, or at least comparison, is no longer necessarily American. Gloria, like most students in Palaw NHS, did not have any direct experience, or even personal access to testimony about schools in Korea and Singapore, or anywhere else overseas. Her perception was informed by a broader cultural milieu that positioned neighbouring Asian countries as exemplars of a particular kind of modernity to which the Philippines should aspire. Though this kind of modern, pan-Asian bricolage had numerous manifestations, which I touch upon throughout this thesis, schools were best represented in it (and consumed most readily) through the medium of Korean high school dramas.

Known more broadly as ‘*Koreanovelas*’, these TV shows (many of which also spawned pocketbooks, containing short stories, and were often watched online or on DVDs) are dubbed with Tagalog voice actors and constitute part of what has been called the ‘Korean wave’ (*Hallyu*) of popular culture in other east Asian countries since 2000 (Kwon 2007:

78). Those set in Korean high schools were squarely aimed at - and in Batangas were predominantly enjoyed by - teenage girls, though some boys had an interest in them too. The majority of discussion over the shows focussed on the relative attractiveness of the different characters (especially the paleness of Korean features), though comments about how nice the schools looked came up surprisingly often. In some ways, comments on the beauty of the students also represented a comment on the quality of the students as, as I discuss below, bodily discipline at school contributed significantly to registers of the effectiveness of schooling.

These cases show how comparisons between education in the Philippines and in other countries (especially Southeast Asian countries) are deployed as a means by which the Philippine schooling system can be critiqued. As Jesusa's case shows, some of these comparisons come from the experience of working overseas, and even bringing up children in other education systems. But the imaginaries of 'foreign' education, stimulated by cultural products such as depictions of schools and students in *Koreanovelas*, exceed this kind of recollection, and animate far more general discussions about the quality of education in the Philippines. While using international comparison is a common way of evaluating the standard of educational systems, these acts of comparison by the Philippine state and people in Palaw must be situated within the 'outward-looking' educational ideology inherited from the American colonial period, as well as the Philippines' unique levels of exposure to the vagaries of transnational labour markets.

In such an environment of acute awareness of the Philippines in relation to other places, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Palaw NHS graduating class was highly conscious of the possibilities of work and education overseas, and although the narratives and imaginations of what being an OFW - or even an emigrant - might entail, were not uncontested, over two-thirds of the class answered positively to the question '*Sa hinaharap, gusto mo bang makapagtrabaho sa ibang bansa?*' (In the future, do you want to work in a different country?). For every time I was aware of students telling one another stories detailing the dangers of working overseas (including a couple of mentions of OFWs who had been killed or jailed), there were many more discussing the benefits of either life overseas, or a

life in the Philippines enriched by remittances. In the survey, 49% of the class had someone in their family who had worked overseas, while an additional 35% knew someone who had worked overseas, but was not related to them. This provided a convincing evidential base for students to build expectations for their own experiences working outside of the Philippines. Given that this outwards orientation when considering both education and labour exerted such influence over the way in which the quality of schooling in the Philippines, and the credibility of work overseas, were framed, how did teachers and students attempt to mediate the perceived relative poorness of schooling, and the consequent and particular precariousness of Filipino graduates as workers? What did they aspire to after graduation?

Throughout my fieldwork, I found that almost no high school students questioned that getting a secondary education, and subsequently entering college, would lead to a better job: those who took different stances either already had a job they liked (usually working for a family member), or, in the case of two girls in the class, had got married and saw their future as staying at home looking after their children. However, there was some dissent to this narrative, as well as contradictions within it. The teachers' admissions about the effectiveness and rigour of high school education undermined, to some extent, the uniformity of schooling's effects on students' skills and qualification. Especially under the new K+12 system, the size of classes meant that teachers had no option but to pass a student at the end of each academic year, regardless of whether they had achieved the requisite grades, or face a backlog of bigger and bigger classes. This was achieved on internal tests with repeated examinations on the same material, so that students were at the very least able to memorise the exam. National exams required strenuous coaching and close adherence to the expected exam topics, all the way up to graduation. Despite these efforts, which did result in many students graduating without reaching the standards specified in the curriculum, a small number of students each year would have to drop out if they could not pass. Although a minority of students who graduated did so with some reliance on this necessary system, it undermined, to some extent, the objective value of a high school diploma, and slightly mediated the expectations of its effects on graduates' futures.

Such inconsistencies within the schooling system bred some disillusionment amongst students, as well as teachers. In one group discussion during a break period, two often-truant students from the lower-tier class, Nardi and Ramil, argued with two other students that school wouldn't get them better jobs, because there were already too many Filipinos for the amount of work available (this was a lament of some of the teachers, too). Eventually, they begrudgingly conceded, but maintained that they didn't need to attend school now, as they could study when they were older anyway, referring to Nardi's acquaintance in the ALS programme. They attended school because their families forced them to, though Ramil claimed that his two elder brothers were equally unconvinced about the opportunities school offered. Both did agree, though, that if you got a high school qualification, the best thing to do would be to go to college.

My own survey in 2013 and follow-up in 2014 suggested that their peers were in agreement: of the 88% of the 192-strong class who had expressed a desire to go on to further study in 2013, when I returned to Palaw in 2014, every student that had graduated had gone to college, either starting immediately after graduating, or enrolling a year later. Everyone that I was able to follow up with had started to study a vocational programme, and many had enrolled on courses that offered specific professional qualifications. Because of the specificity of many tertiary vocational and professional courses, the students had to select the profession or field they would ideally be going into at the age of 15 or 16. High school education was thus highly future oriented, but along a uniform and linear trajectory, as it was seen as part of a series of educational encounters that would culminate in the professional qualifications needed to occupy particular professional jobs. My survey (see *fig. 2*) of the graduating class indicates the range of jobs that students were aiming for in their final year of high school.

Of interest is the number of professional jobs listed, but the small number of careers that would require postgraduate study. The survey reflects answers in my follow-up interviews that suggested that students felt pressure to turn their study into financial remuneration quite quickly. For many of the jobs listed there were accelerated three- or two-year courses available at universities and colleges in Batangas, potentially saving tuition fees

and allowing a faster transformation of education into salary. Thus, the fourteen respondents who simply desired to help their family or earn a high salary were expressing an intent implicit in many of the other answers: to make more money.

Most of the students' own discussions about what a high-paying job was good for focussed on the material goods one could afford - expensive electronics being the primary target - but also the increased standard of living for oneself and one's family. This covered a having bigger house, a car or flashy motorcycle, the ability to pay for extravagant meals at special occasions, and enough money to take one's family and friends out to go to the cinema and malls in the bigger towns, and eat regularly at McDonald's and other chain restaurants. The focus on the material rewards of schooling was often an explicit justification for lost opportunities in the short term, either in terms of labour (parental concern over lost household income from children) or leisure (student's preference for activities outside of school).

However, these kinds of multi-faceted and intergenerational (between parents and children) or inter-temporal (students' own present leisure against their future) exchange point towards cracks in the way that ideologies of linear aspiration expressed themselves through the institutional processes of schooling in Batangas. Margaret Frye suggests a similarly 'multi-temporal' explanation for motivations in the present. In dealing with the apparently unrealistic optimism of her young Malawian informants, Frye demonstrates how moral actions in the present that were seen to transform personhood (ambition, effort, optimism, and resistance to sexual temptation) (2012: 1567) were oriented towards distant aspirational "bright futures" (especially college education). Such aspirations were themselves anticipated to bring about educational success at high school in the medium term. Though exchanges such as these are dealt with in more depth in chapters 5 and 7, throughout this thesis the ways in which schooling and education involved complex engagements with the future and futurity are explored. Developing a more nuanced picture of what 'aspiration' is in Batangas is crucial to this strand of my analysis.

A recent revival in academic interest in aspiration - following Arjun Appadurai (2004) - has led to more detailed thought on how aspiration fits into wider methods of theorising the future. Tavory & Eliasoph, building on classic sociologies of anticipation (Schutz 1963, 1973; Bourdieu 1973, 2000; Bourdieu & Passeron 1977), construct a model that distinguishes between three ‘modes of future making’:

“...(a) protentions, or moment-by-moment anticipations that actors usually take for granted; (b) actors’ trajectories through time, which proceed in ways that are more or less culturally predictable; and (c) plans and temporal landscapes, overarching temporal orientations that actors experience as inevitable and even natural - such as the sequence of grades in elementary school and a calendar’s grid.”

(Tavory & Eliasoph 2013: 909)

Aspirations, they say, fall into the second category of ‘trajectories’, which “explicitly or implicitly treat action as part of an unfolding process with a beginning, middle, end, an emotional tone, and a cast of characters; this mode folds within it both intentional ‘projects’ and more passive movements within culturally expected narratives” (*ibid*: 911-912). Such orientations towards the future cannot, however, be theorised accurately without thinking about the ways in which actors at different points interact aspirations with the other two categories, or discard one in favour of the other: a process they term ‘future coordination’.

Tavory & Eliasoph’s model fits with other attempts to think about how aspirations fit into a multiplicity of possible orientations towards the future. For Bunnell & Goh aspirations “give ... temporal direction to energies” (2012: 1), meaning a placing of momentary inclinations, desires and affective engagements into longer term narratives of expectation, hope, or anxiety. In trying to explicate how different futures of the self can be privileged or discarded in the present, more outlandish theorisations advance notions of ‘quantum personhood’ to capture the uncertain causation, interrelated temporalities and indeterminate existences of the person ‘in time’ (Alexander 2015).

My own engagement with aspiration in Batangas is also careful to follow Elsa Davidson's cautions that aspiration is always a social and political (and I would add historical) process, as well as an individual one (2011: 6). In her ethnography of schooling in Silicon Valley, this concern is reflected in Davidson's emphasis on 'aspiration management' as the analytic for examining young people's aspiration, in order to highlight individuals' active engagement in the future, the structural limitations of these futures, and the "paradox of self-limitation and desire inherent to all aspirations" (*ibid*: 13-14).

The aspiration to financial security and the tendency for comparison with foreign standards of education and success were most closely intertwined at Palaw NHS through the concept and rhetoric of 'competitiveness'. 'Competitiveness' as an ideological construct operated across a number of different levels, at once able to capture the shortcomings of an entire nation-state within the capitalist world system (Santiago 2005; Borrás 2007: 157-164; Bayangos & Jansen 2010) and be deployed, as it was in Batangas, as something that teachers should try to instil in the students, and that students should try to instil in themselves. Being 'competitive' is thus an example of "[t]he trope of individual responsibility as motivating discourse and cultural glue" that Loïc Wacquant identifies as underlying the other 'institutional logics' of state apparatus operating under neoliberalism: extension of market mechanisms, dismantling of protective welfare in favour of 'corrective workfare', and an aggressively expanded penal policy (2010: 213-214; 2012: 72).

The influence of neoliberalism in this form has been demonstrated elsewhere within state policy and the history of its ideology documented in the Philippines (Bello 2009), and the specific presence in the classroom of neoliberal ideologies - such as the instrumentalism of English instruction - has also been suggested (Hsu 2015). The encouragement of competition between students as part of the habitual practice of schooling has been documented as a feature of classroom dynamics and constitutive of a 'hidden curriculum' of neoliberal ideas (Wilkins 2011), though its presence as an ideological tenet was actually more explicit at Palaw NHS due to the aforementioned close articulation between successful schooling and employability.

Between 2012 and 2013, when I was in Palaw, DepEd enthusiastically promoted the importance of competitiveness as an outcome of schooling; individually for students in labour markets and collectively, therefore, for the education system and the nation in international relations. It was mostly through DepEd literature and teacher's interpretations of their generalised edicts about the future of schooling that competitiveness was propagated ideologically. For DepEd, having a competitive education system meant having competitive graduates, and this referred almost exclusively to their ability to get jobs after leaving school. When teachers were required to update their training qualifications (during my fieldwork, several of the teachers at Palaw NHS were taking masters' degrees in education at Batangas State University), their recounts of what they learned frequently referred to competitiveness. Science teacher Ma'am Jane recalled a seminar in which they were told: "if your students cannot find work when they graduate, that is your responsibility!"

The collapsing of international competitiveness into individual responsibility, and the connections between competitiveness, education and an overseas orientation, were manifested to the students less directly. On the side of Mr Reynald's classroom, which was also the school library, a plastic case covered a noticeboard that displayed newsletters, bulletins, and occasionally students' projects. For about 6 months in 2013, a student project occupied half the board, depicting a blue and green painted globe, with a slogan written across the centre: "What Makes Education Competitive?" Surrounding the globe were four floating bubbles, containing the words 'English', 'Math', 'Science' and 'Technology'. I asked Kevin, a fourth-year student, what the poster meant, he explained "*mag-aaral kami dahil sa pwede makipagkompetensiya sa ibang bansa*" (we're studying so that we can compete with other countries).

The imposition of a 'mantra' that defines and orients every aspect of the economic rejuvenation and aspiration anticipated from schooling is comparable to the emphasis, identified by Nick Long, placed on the '*prestasi*' (achievement) of young people in Riau, Indonesia. Responding to a 'human resource crisis' caused by underemployment of locals and failed development projects, the cultivation of '*anak berprestasi*' (high-achieving

children) who competed in ‘*lomba*’ or tourism pageants¹⁸ came to index the economic success of both the education system and the community as a whole (2011: 48). However, through the failure of both the pageant organisers and the competitors to act “in good faith” - the officials dismissing the efforts of the students on racist and classist grounds, and the students becoming sceptical of the administration of their own province - pageants were ultimately disenchanting (*ibid*: 57-58). Long’s conclusions highlight the disputations and occasionally ironic failures of these kinds of imposed ideologies: in Palaw NHS ‘competitiveness’ was similarly contested.

The pressure of ‘competitiveness’ was, unsurprisingly, quite burdensome for both the teachers and students, who while often sceptical of DepEd’s pronouncements, were quite aware that graduating from high school would at the very least open doors into some kinds of work that would otherwise be shut. The teachers were hamstrung too by the school’s lack of resources, and so knew that their students could not become ‘competitive’ in the way envisioned by state education policy. When I asked, then, “*ano ang tunay na dahilan ng pasok?*” (what is the real reason for coming to school?), teachers would overcome these contradictions by maintaining that schooling did prepare students for work. But when I wanted an elaboration of what useful skills or lessons one learns at school, beyond pointing out the ability to read, speak English¹⁹ and do sums, both students and teachers would suggest the effects of *disciplinary techniques* employed by the school, and reference how these prepared students for the work in less direct ways not centred on qualifications.

One of the crucial means by which discipline was taught was by encouraging students to emulate, even imitate, their teachers. The exact significances of this ‘imitative pedagogy’ in the Philippines are discussed in more detail in chapter 3, and the position of teachers as role models in chapter 2. In the next chapter’s examination of ‘role models’, I describe how one teacher - Mr Joseph - assembles a retinue of students to participate in community assistance, in order to “set a good example”. However, I want to suggest that considering teachers as paragons of virtue and studiousness to be accurately emulated - a view Andrew Kipnis finds prevalent in elementary schools in rural China (2011: 107), for ex-

ample - is unsatisfactory. Rather, student 'imitation' of teachers must be understood within this particularly Philippine mode of 'imitative pedagogy', in which teachers are seen to 'perform' roles that incorporate (sometimes literally) particular skills, values, and abilities. The local Batangueño or 'deep' Tagalog word for perform was '*palabas*', (lit. being outside), a word also used sometimes to mean 'pageant'. '*Palabas*' has further connotations however, most significantly referencing exhibition and display, and specifically the act of 'showing' oneself to an audience. The understanding of Filipino selfhood advanced by Ileo (1979), Rafael (1988) and others, however, suggests that this 'showing' of the self is not the revelation of a solid inner state: rather, '*palabas*' is also an act of creation in a particular moment.

The importance of this kind of creative, transformative performance is discussed in far more detail in chapter 3. Here, I return to one of the most obvious means by which a 'disciplinary' pedagogy was also expressed in an 'imitative' mode was uniform. Teachers were, like the students, required to wear uniforms consisting of a green or pink embroidered *barong* (a traditional collared shirt) or blouse with trousers, though students' uniforms were policed far more closely, and not limited to clothing but also to the rest of the body. During one visit to the high school, early on in my stay in Palaw, I had joined one of Mr Joseph's Filipino classes, and while the students completed a silent exercise, the teacher had made his way along the rows of boys with a pair of scissors, snipping off any hair that came below the collar (a number of boys wore short pony tails). This caused disgust amongst the victims, but provoked waves of stifled giggles from the rest of the class. The boys were hardly the only victims of body policing by the teachers, though: high heels, excessive make-up and jewellery were also off limits.

Uniforming did not just encompass the clothing and adornment of students, however, as behaviour that failed to maintain a clean body was also restricted. Sweating and failing to wash or cut hair were particular crimes, and the link between this kind of body policing and employability was spelled out to students. At the start of the new term in June 2012, Ma'am Rosa read out the new school rules for her class, including a warning for the boys not to return to afternoon lessons sweating after playing basketball in the lunch break:

“Kung nagtatrabaho ka sa opisina, at nagsusuot ka ng terno, mapapawis pa ka?” (If you’re working in an office, and wearing a suit, will you still be sweaty?). Once one reached the eldest grade in the school, play that would disrupt a controlled and clean body had to be left behind for the younger children, and the transfer to (professional) adulthood marked by graduation, and thus employment, could begin.

While uniform was an important register of the success or failure of schooling, of greater concern to teachers was the behaviour (*asal*) of students in the classroom, and the importance of them being quiet (*tahimik*). In the estimations of the teachers at Palaw NHS, the noisiness of Filipino students was another area that they surely compared very unfavourably with their foreign counterparts, and I was constantly forced to give unsatisfactorily negative answers to the question, *“Ang mga bata sa UK - mas tahimik di ba?”* (kids in the UK - they’re quieter, right?). In my view, the classes in Palaw were not particularly rowdy, but the possibility is that for teachers requiring a higher standard of obedience and attentiveness in classes of sixty or more, little could be done with talkative classrooms.

Also significant were the types of disciplinary relations that existed between teachers and students in their more personal everyday interactions. Teachers would identify the best students as those who would not only achieve good grades, but also show them great deference, respect and treat them with greater formality than would be expected as normal through age difference alone. To begin with, explaining the nuances of the ways in which students showed deference towards teachers requires a closer look at the ways in which the polite signifier ‘*po*’ is used more widely in Tagalog. Usually added to the end of greetings and questions, especially requests, ‘*po*’ is used alongside the plural forms of pronouns (similar to polite forms of address in French or Spanish) to identify position on a social hierarchy that is traditionally determined by age, so that the younger conversant will always address the elder using ‘*po*’. In addition to this use, ‘*po*’ is used to identify other kinds of social hierarchy. For instance when an elder person speaks to a well-known politician, or when an elder shop assistant is with a younger customer, they might use ‘*po*’ to address them. In this way, ‘*po*’ becomes a more generic formality, rendering other statements more polite.

The use of '*po*' can also be more varied, depending on the emphasis on it in a given sentence. For instance, one would expect students to use '*po*' when addressing teachers, but some will use it more deliberately than others to display extra deference. I had barely noticed any of these cues until one teacher, Mr Reynald, commented on a student's behaviour after they had spoken to him:

Mr R: "*Matalino siya, may mabuting asal siya*" (He's clever, he has good behaviour)

CM: "*Pero, bakit?*" (But why is that?)

Mr R: "*Kasi, mag-aral siya nang mabuti at palaging makinig sa amin, niyang mga titser. May paggalang siya sa matanda.*" (Because he studies well and always listens to us, his teachers. He has respect for adults)

He explained that respectful students would use '*po*' repeatedly in conversation, or take extra care to structure sentences so as to be able to increase the implied deference. Some students twinned this more formalised use of language with other deferential non-verbal communication, including crossing hands behind the back, lowering the voice, and bowing the head while talking. Some young people would use this kind of behaviour with adults outside of school when addressing adults such as Church leaders, but the prevalence within the school was much greater.

The responses of teachers to these behaviours were just as important in reinforcing attitudes of subservience. It was commonplace to see teachers respond very dismissively to students - not making eye contact when talking, pointing directions rather than saying them - and, as mentioned above, to give them menial tasks. Students would be brusquely ordered to fetch jugs of water for teachers on hot days, carry boxes of books for them, or rearrange furniture in their classrooms. Members of the student government were expected to be particularly productive in performing tasks for teachers, and were the ones pressed into extra work whenever there was a special occasion. Serving food at school events and cleaning up afterwards was delegated to these students, and if any special

guest from the Church or school board were present they would be pressed into service as personal attendants.

Additionally, not insignificant portions of the school day were spent performing menial tasks, running errands, and working, rather than studying. The principal example of this kind of practice was the 'housekeeping' or maintenance period. Before students were allowed to go home at 4pm, for half an hour the entire student body took up brooms and rubbish bags to tidy up the campus. Each class would be allocated a task: jobs included pruning bushes, picking up litter, polishing floors with coconut husks, dusting the inside of the classrooms, collecting fallen palm leaves, and so on. Meanwhile, the teachers would either oversee the work, or would be at their desks catching up on marking or administration.

Given that a reasonable explanation (that was occasionally offered) for the need to press students to do work on the school campus was the lack of money for any custodial staff, I was surprised by the extent to which the disciplining of students and their subservience to teachers would be defended as the means by which students' life chances would be most improved. In other words, there was very little emphasis on the concern that encouraging students to obey instructions and do menial tasks all day would do anything other than allow them to prosper educationally and thus materially.²⁰

Through the kinds of labour students were expected to do in school, and ways they were expected to relate to teachers, schooling practices were mostly successful in establishing a consensus about what it was most important for a good graduating student to have: discipline, cleanliness, 'professionalism', respect and good (non-disruptive) behaviour. Simultaneously, the consensus surrounding what it meant to be a successful graduate - and to have received a 'good' education - *outside* of the school relied upon the idea of 'competitiveness' as its defining characteristic. At least in students and teachers reflections on the purposes and usefulness of schooling, a strong link was being made between successfully graduating, being able to get a well-paid job, and learning to labour in service or manual work.

Conclusion

The argument of this chapter has been that the history of colonial education in the Philippines has - by attempting to gear schooling towards facilitating particular kinds of extraction (of natural resources, or goods, or souls) from the Philippines to the outside world - oriented expectations of schooling's outcomes and evaluations of its quality into a constant state of 'outward-looking.' In contemporary Batangas, this has primarily manifested as a reliance on international comparison to express critiques of schooling practice. In turn, this reliance has encouraged teachers and students to view the relevance of graduates' abilities to the needs of *global* capital as one of the most important criteria by which their scholarly success should be judged. The precise idiom through which this is expressed is the concept of competitiveness, which assesses schooling in terms of the labour value of the student, and her orientation towards modes of assessment defined by 'international standards'. By centring educational policy on this concept, the state turns the Philippines' unfavourable economic comparisons with other nation-states into a problem of producing the correct kind of student.

In this collapsing of the fate of the nation-state into that of its students and their successful monetisation, there is an echo with parts of the history of American colonial schooling. Paul Kramer has described American colonial governance as defined by the metaphor of tutelage, "cast[ing] the colonial state in its entirety as a school" (2006: 201). It is my contention here that the logics of tutelary colonial rule now apply in some respects to the contemporary Philippine state's own perceptions of the Philippines. Now that labour has been alighted upon as the kind of export that can be productively extracted from the Philippines, the state must 'tutor' the people into becoming 'competitive' products. Industrial schooling prepares the students to have value added and then placed in a global marketplace to compete against similar products from other countries, to the point that "there is not much distance between human labour and raw material" (Tadiar 2004: 55).

However, we must recall Crone's hats. I asked earlier in this chapter if a 'hidden curriculum' was causing the (re)production of certain social relations, particularly class relations,

in the Philippines: what I have described here bears the appearance of a schooling system attempting to make this happen. However, as with Crone's hats,²¹ such an application of the logic of conventional social engineering to render the Philippines productive in particular ways was undermined by a failure to recognise the presence of other social and cultural effects. Throughout the rest of this thesis, I will attempt to complicate an orthodox reading of social reproduction through schooling by exploring how certain subversions of and resistances to schooling as a technology of power complicate the meaning of schooling in western Batangas.

One such complication arises in a consideration of why schooling is attractive in the first place. Students' orientations towards work overseas as a means of attaining material wealth in fact suggested forms of aspiration that were actually highly conscious of their social embeddedness. The limitation of aspirations to shorter college educations, and the prominence of caring for kin in the social aspirations of students recall Elsa Davidson's 'aspiration management', particularly in its relevance to "imaginings of one's present and future place in the world and one's community or neighbourhood in relation to other people and places" (2011: 41-42). The specific 'place' of the students here is in relation to their parents and wider family, and suggests a sensibility to the potentially alienating effects of ideologies such as competitiveness.

But their 'place' is also within a nation-state, and thus in a network of relations with 'the foreign', defined by extraction and unflattering comparison in this chapter, but present in multiple forms that I discuss throughout this thesis. The configuration of aspirations as collective endeavours of both kin relations and the nation thus incorporates numerous cross-temporal relations. However, having established the far-reaching temporal and geographical possibilities of schooling in the aspirations of students, a reminder of the structural limitations of such aspirations is necessary. At Palaw NHS, students' aspirations to get a good job and earn a good wage did not solely look overseas, nor does schooling's colonial legacy, emphasis on English tuition and 'outward-looking' orientation just place Filipino students-as-labour in relation to *global* capital. During my fieldwork within and beyond the school, I found that transnational and national registers of aspiration were

confused, as the cultural signifiers of prestige, internationalism and modernity were appropriated not only by foreign entities, but also by a specifically *urban* middle class. In rural areas such as western Batangas, a degree of unpicking is necessary to discern exactly what constituted a middle-class identity, particularly in its relationship with schooling. The linkages between the rural and urban in the Philippines, the way in which teachers themselves embody its dynamics, and how it has created a new middle class, are the subjects of the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Uncanny Properties:

Negotiating the new urbanisms of vacant lots, modern teachers and wealthy saints in rural Batangas

Introduction

Immediately after I arrived in the Philippines in 2011, I arranged accommodation in Quezon City, in the north of Metro Manila, so as to be near to Ateneo de Manila University where I was enrolled during fieldwork. I lived in an annex next to the house of a wealthy professional couple, entrepreneurs who imported Australian steak,²² and their four children, the eldest two of whom attended the extremely prestigious private high school affiliated with the University. The house was within a residential subdivision called Bulaklak Village. The ‘village’ contained large, two-storey stone and concrete houses often surrounded by walls and gardens with well-tended lawns and lush decorative vegetation, and featured a central communal sports centre and swimming pool. In Quezon City, such ‘villages’ were not uncommon. The city housed the workforces of numerous government and diplomatic offices, as well as those associated with the universities (the University of the Philippines was nearby too) and even some who commuted to the other cities in the north and east of Metro Manila. It was with these wealthy elites that this kind of housing was popular, and consequently ‘villages’ comprised a great deal of new development across the city. In fact, Bulaklak Village was one of the older of these developments, having been completed in the 1980s.

A high wall, topped with barbed wire enclosed Bulaklak Village itself, and one could only enter the enclosure through checkpoints permanently staffed by armed guards and blockaded by barriers and speed bumps. It was surrounded by commercial developments - fast food restaurants, banks, strip malls - that catered for the subdivision’s denizens. Partitioned from the main walled area, but located near to the gates and attached to the outer wall were accommodations for the employees of the community. These were much smaller, single-storey concrete buildings, the households of which varied in composition from very crowded lodgings for four or five workers sharing a room, to homes for entire fami-

lies. It was here that the gardeners, guards, cooks, cleaners, drivers and nannies employed by the gated community would live, at least while they had contracts.²³ The lives of the staff were governed by a harsh set of rules policing their presence inside the ‘village’. Workers had to carry photo identification detailing their job and their employer, which could be inspected at any time by the guards, they had to remain in ‘work clothes’ so as not to be confused with residents, and they needed to be able to justify their movement around the ‘village’ to any inquiring resident while out on errands (usually accomplished with a note from the employer), especially if you were there at night.

In this chapter, I want to describe the extent to which the kind of urban forms and spatial expressions of class I encountered in Bulaklak ‘village’ were also evident in Palaw and Santa Clara. Because, I argue, ‘urbanism’ was often experienced through the orientation to new social and cultural forms as much as those impacting the built environment, I look at three kinds of social and spatial artefact here; houses, education, and religion. My material speaks to the existing literature on the interactions between migration, remittance economies and house-building practices, as well as anthropologies of houses and homes in Southeast Asia, but also addresses how houses in Palaw were deployed as a means of confronting anxieties surrounding a wider complex of urban, modern, forms, and considers how successful attempts at the ‘domestication’ of ‘foreign’ architectures and household organisations have been within the context of global capitalism. Some of the responses to this conflict in Palaw deployed diverse vocabularies of spirituality and the uncanny, and the meanings of these responses are also examined.

Education and schooling also represented a site of conflict over modernism and class, particularly the social roles that teachers played as arbiters of the aspirational and modernising value of education. As seen in the previous chapter, attempts to ‘domesticate’ foreignness also abound in the school, and are similarly ambiguous in their outcomes. Finally the control and employment of images of saints indexed how social economic changes precipitated by remittances and understandings of ‘modern’ religious practice. I contrast the custodianship and inheritance of one important image in Santa Clara - the ‘*Señor Tres Caida*’ (Third Fall of Christ) - with the everyday devotional practices sur-

rounding domestic images, and the borrowing and deployment of images for '*santuhan*' ceremonies.

Through talk of houses, saints and teachers in Palaw and Santa Clara, it is possible to explore a number of interlinked elements of the Philippines' class politics. This exploration covers the transformations of rural land use, pursued by urban expansionism from Manila, but perpetuated by the ongoing influx of money sent home by overseas workers. It also charts the consequent contestations of middle-class identity between landowners, the newly wealthy families of OFWs, and others desiring upward social mobility. Finally, the chapter examines how the trappings of an urban professional class - such as the social divisions of gated communities, educational aspirations, and certain architectural aesthetics - are more or less successfully 'hybridised' as they interface with the political economies of Palaw, Santa Clara, and western Batangas.

'Villages', Urban Expansion and SEZs

Bulaklak 'village' was in many ways metonymic of the wider urban environment of metro Manila, in which vast areas of informal and semi-formal housing (home to 40% of the city's residents) and commercial buildings are littered with walled 'subdivisions' such as Bulaklak, between which the wealthy can travel literally over the heads of the other inhabitants of the city using the network of flyovers constructed since the late 1980s (Tadiar 2004: 77; Tremlett 2012: 416). Such developments are symptomatic of a 'neoliberal' approach to urban planning, in that they facilitate the segregation of urban spaces and are 'derestricted', disorganised and atomistic in their organisation. Such divisiveness and inequality in Manila's urban spaces - beyond and within the form of the 'village' - has also come under a great deal of scrutiny and criticism within the Philippines. The massive influx of migrants from rural regions looking for work has caused a housing crisis that has exaggerated the economic inequalities of the city and which government attempts at both liberalised planning policy and state-run relocation schemes have failed to address (Berner 1997; 1999). The growth of the city's population beyond its housing capacity, and the continuing concentration of urban land ownership in the hands of an elite minority (Abad 1991; Connell 1999), have turned housing for the urban poor into a bat-

tleground of class interests. Recently, contestations between those needing housing and urban developers have flared up into instances of violence, as attempts to demolish ‘illegal’ houses have been met with resistance, often aggressively quelled by the police.

A response to this conflict has been projects of ‘housing development’ (which also usually involve slum clearance anyway), conducted by non-governmental philanthropic and charitable organisations. One such organisation is ‘Gawad Kalinga’,²⁴ who employ volunteer workers and use donations of money (including many from the Filipino diaspora) and land to rebuild houses in very poor urban areas. Their work, which began in 2003, has been widely commended for replacing ‘slums’ with rows of modernist, box-shaped, two-storey houses painted in distinctive pastel colours (see *fig. 3*). Although this work began in Caloocan City in Metro Manila, the organisation has expanded its projects all over the Philippines, and actively frames itself as a ‘nation-building’ project.

However, as is shown through the excellent ethnographic work conducted with the organisation by Faith Kares (2014), Gawad Kalinga’s take on ‘enlightened capitalism’ also serves to reinforce strands of neoliberal ideology. On Gawad Kalinga’s website, they state that: “We learned that poverty is a behavioural problem with economic consequences. At its very root is the loss of dignity of the human person which robs him of his capacity to dream and the opportunities to achieve those dreams. Through consistent presence and hand-holding, we are able to restore the poor’s confidence, provide their basic needs to be able to live dignified lives, and open the doors of opportunity to become productive citizens in society” (Gawad Kalinga 2014).

Kares shows how the implication that poverty is a moral failure informs expectations of the kinds of community, rather than just the kinds of abode, that Gawad Kalinga are producing. Much of the organisation’s work presupposes the homogeneity of an impoverished ‘underclass’, and then frames its attempts at alleviating its poverty in terms of individual reform. Residents are consequently expected to become ‘productive citizens’, a term that of course includes particular kinds of labour, but also refers to maintaining the cleanliness of the street and, by extension, avoiding alcohol and other vices. Further, it

corroborates the explicitly nationalist goals of Gawad Kalinga, which Kares also elaborates on in her discussion of its co-option of the discourse of 'heroism' surrounding OFWs to refer to their donation to the organisation, and to emphasise the moral necessity of the beneficiaries reform (2014: 195). The parallels between the form of urban space that Gawad Kalinga is trying to produce, and the sanitised and isolated 'village' are clear.

The reason I begin this chapter with a description of Bulaklak Village and the Gawad Kalinga neighbourhoods, both spaces removed from my field site, is that during my many journeys in and out of the city and across southern Luzon, the spatial organisation, architectural forms, and economic signification of the 'village' became strikingly familiar. Indeed, while I had anticipated finding gated communities in the larger town of Santa Clara (there were several of varying types) I was surprised to discover that on its outskirts even Palaw contained not one, but two 'villages'. The construction of these developments (in both towns) was closely tied in local accounts to remittance economies, as it was understood that many OFWs returning home would invest significant sums in building extravagant houses for themselves and their families.

Throughout my fieldwork I thus became familiarised with the 'village' or subdivision as a living space within settlements of a variety of types, but always in some way associated with the Philippines' connections overseas. Even, as I show below, where the inhabitants of a 'village' were not former migrants, the implicit aesthetics and cultural significances of the buildings themselves, and their occupants' class affiliations, were referential to the economy of remittances and the kinds of status differentiation it inculcated. 'Village' houses always embodied some orientation towards foreignness, and this foreignness itself became associated with the geographic and social exclusion of these new urban forms.

However, in spite of the close associations between these types of abode and the desirable successes and artistic sensibilities of overseas work and 'foreignness', in all of the developments I came across throughout southern Luzon, the feature that struck me most immediately was their incompleteness. Coming south out of the metropolis, travelling into the region of CALABARZON, the spread of residential and commercial construction is

unabated, or at least its ambition is. In particular near to the city of Dasmariñas, enormous tracts of what used to be rice paddies had been drained and transformed into extensive residential plots, but many lie empty. Every mile or so along the highway going south into southern Luzon billboards displayed images of familial bliss in front of the ‘cookie-cutter’ houses, looking almost identical to the triumphal images of families and communities standings in front of rows of new Gawad Kalinga houses. The houses in the adverts either already sat in pastel-coloured rows within their particular subdivision or were (more likely) about to be built, and the image photo-shopped, with the ever-increasing professional classes in the southern Metro Manila cities of Muntinlupa, Las Piñas and Parañaque in mind.

There were shopping centres and strip malls, even a hospital, built in preparation of the arrival of new residents, but so far very few actual residences. In the resort town of Tagaytay, too, similar arrangements of houses next to houses-to-be spread out over the mountainsides, adjacent to hotels and golf courses where there used to be pineapple groves. The enormous and elaborate gateways into the ‘villages’ are advertisements not necessarily of the beautiful, two-storey painted houses within, but the possibility of one’s own house being constructed amongst them in one of the abundant empty lots. The most active and populated sites within this area of urban expansion were the factories of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) - sites where foreign firms could erect facilities and employ workers while exempt from the ‘protectionism’ of higher taxation and many labour laws.

Philip Kelly has documented the effects of such zones (and those like it, such as Export Processing Zones, EPZs), and placed the Cavite SEZ within an attempt to transform the region south of Manila into a free trade zone attracting FDI in cheap commodity production (cf. Ortega 2012b). This in turn was part of a concerted effort at the ‘liberalisation’ of the Philippines economy in the 1990s under Fidel Ramos (Kelly 2000: 41), desiring in part the cosmopolitanism and internationalism of foreign firms, who supposedly also represented a departure from the cronyism and ‘inward-orientation’ of Philippine businesses (Pattugalan 2010: 133-134). The social effects of these zones were apparent even in

Batangas, where some of my acquaintances were mobilised into migrating, at least temporarily, into the locality of the zones. They do not, however, live in the brand new houses advertised on the highway: three of my acquaintances in Palaw who usually worked as day labourers in the sugar fields or as trike drivers had been recruited to work brief stints at a textile factory in Cavite, when they were accommodated in boarding houses just outside the zone.

CALABARZON has been targeted since the early 1990s for a particularly aggressive brand of urbanisation and land use conversions (Canlas 1991), extending parts of metro Manila southwards in the southern Luzon region (Magno-Ballesteros 2000: 8). This rapid stretching out of urban spatial forms, of which the SEZs are one constitutive part, into rural environments has created what has been termed ‘peri-urban interfaces’: differentiated spaces where the borders between the urban and the rural are contested, hybridised and blurred. Theorising contemporary city-spaces such as these cannot depend on a clear-cut distinction between what is urban and what is rural; there is no clear dividing line (McGregor, Simon & Thompson 2006: 4; c.f. Champion & Hugo 2004). In characterising peri-urban forms in Southeast Asia, an influential contribution has been Terry McGee’s concept of ‘*desakota*’,²⁵ a supposedly Southeast Asian-specific urban form, in which agricultural activity and urban population densities coexist along built-up corridors between major cities (McGee 1991). The highways through Dasmariñas, alongside which pineapple groves and expansive urban conurbations seem to sit on top of one another, were evocative of McGee’s description.

The neoliberalism of such urban forms can be identified in the correlation between the effects of ‘village’ households, the SEZs, and the Gawad Kalinga projects. As the houses of migrant workers and, to a lesser extent, the Gawad Kalinga houses, aim to reflect and incorporate a desirable foreignness, so SEZs are an attempt to bring foreignness via internationalism in industry and business into the Philippines. The SEZs also insist on a neoliberal conception of a worker: mobile and displaced from social context, and particularly from civil or state protection, like the trike drivers who were underemployed in Palaw moved away from their families to work in Cavite. In the next section, the architectural

styles and household compositions of the ‘villages’ are contrasted with older houses in Palaw, a comparison that also points to ways in which neoliberal ideologies of personhood can alter existent kinship organisation and class structures.

Houses and the Uncanny

Although actually existing examples of the normative construction of the house and household through the life course were becoming increasingly rare in Palaw and Santa Clara through the increasing mobility and changing attitudes of younger generations (especially young women) towards domestic politics, there remained consensus surrounding what it would look like. Houses should be built for newlyweds after marriage, though ideally near to the house of a parent, so as to ensure the proximity of siblings and, subsequently, cousins of their children. While some studies of the pre-colonial Philippines suggest that the houses of newlyweds objectify the institution of marriage in a formal way (Scott 1994: 57), and others have claimed a close link between elements of the structure of traditional houses and the roles of wives and husbands (Pingol 2001), I found a greater degree of flexibility regarding this notion in Palaw (cf. Cannell 1999: 52). More emphasis was placed on having children as the means by which a marriage becomes ‘*totoo*’ (real), a fact demonstrated by the concerned looks I received whenever anyone found out my wife and I did not have children ourselves.

In the more rural regions of the Palaw municipality, household organisation conformed closely to a typically Southeast Asian ‘downward-looking’ kinship suggested by this emphasis on conception and children (Geertz & Geertz 1964; Carsten 1995a, 1997; also see chapters 4 and 5). Houses were usually built of bamboo and corrugated tin sheets for the roof, sometimes raised off the ground on posts in the traditional style of a ‘*nipa*’ hut (the symbolism of which I return to below). Concrete houses were becoming more commonplace, and a family might build one if they came into a little money, but they were always unpainted and just one storey tall. The gathering of houses and households into compounds on a particular parcel of land closely matched practices described in others parts of island Southeast Asia (Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995a; Cannell 1999: 13-14) with cognatic understandings of kinship, in which lateral ties are emphasised through the close

habitation of siblings, their spouses, and their children. Although most common among the poorer farming households outside of the *poblasyon*, compounds were also a way of organising urban housing for the wealthier families in Palaw and Santa Clara, and while the building of adjoining houses was very rare in the subdivisions (due to restriction to the sizes of lots), one or two families who had received money from migration had augmented their house with an extra storey, an extension, or even an entirely new house in the yard inside their compound.²⁶

For instance, the house of Yasmin's family, a congregant at the Pentecostal Church and college student in Tagaytay, had benefitted from the remittances of her father's work in Saudi Arabia. As he wanted to build houses for his siblings, the family had constructed partitioned 'apartments' attached to their own where Yasmin's two uncles (and their families) and her grandmother now lived. My own house for the latter part of my fieldwork fell within the compound of Jesusa, my host, and was one of three houses built on the plot with money sent from her husband in Japan. While she and her daughter lived in the main, two-storey house, Jesusa made an income of upwards of PHP5,000 per month from renting two of the houses, and then let her visiting friends stay in the third.

The presence of the 'traditional' method of house-building - the *nipa* hut - was actually maintained as part of the same project of augmenting existing concrete houses, but rather than being used as actual housing had recreational and prestige value instead. In the plots of a number of houses in Palaw and Santa Clara, residents had constructed small *nipa* huts as a recreational space outside of the house, usually about 10-15 square metres in size. I knew of only one person who actually lived permanently in one of the houses built on the plot of a larger house, but all that I visited were capable of providing shelter for two or three people. The *nipa* hut was often produced as a totem of the traditional Batangueño rural culture, and thus of Filipino nationalism, through its reference in folk songs such as the popular '*bahay kubo*' (square house). Although Jesusa didn't have a *nipa* hut on her property, she explained that the reason that people would build one (or have one built - a local bamboo farming business could come to your house) was that everyone used to live like that, so they should keep a house like it next to their new

house. *Nipa* huts were often called '*tradisyonal*' (traditional) for this part of the Philippines, and when used also recalled in their occupants similarly *tradisyonal* forms of sociality, such as the '*tagay*' (drinking circle), where they would entertain guests and drink and eat in the shade in the evening.

Houses of the middle classes in the town centre were quite often older than those found in the subdivisions, with many predating the migration boom of the 1980s. In Palaw, one house in particular was built in the colonial '*bahay na bato*' (house of stone) Spanish style, with '*capiz*' (white, translucent oyster shells) windows lining a balcony-ringed upper floor, built with mahogany on top of the stone lower section. Some histories of this kind of house trace its architectural lineage back to the *bahay kubo* (Zialcita & Tinio 1980: 19), though these authors also tie its emergence in the nineteenth century to an increasingly wealthy and politically influential mestizo class of '*ilustrados*', who built such houses to suggest "thrones" (*ibid*: 128).^{27 28} The political significances of the *ilustrado* as an at best uneasy and at worst illegitimate administrator of 'Filipino culture' are thus condensed in these houses, as is artfully demonstrated in Smita Lahiri's introduction to her account of cultural nationalism in Mount Banahaw. She presents us with an encounter, in an old Spanish *bahay na bato*, between a folk religious leader and a politician, both of whom deploy the 'symbolic capital' of 'nativeness' and nation (2005: 26-30). Lahiri's discussion of the religious leader, the '*Suprema*', who lives in the house, shows how claims to authority via the memory and history of Spanish rule are highly fraught, and are tied, as with Zialcita & Tinio's conception of the 'ancestral house', to ideologies of native history too.

The house in Palaw was owned by a '*pulitiko*' (politician) family in Santa Clara, was surrounded by a tall wall, and was referred to often in conversations about what Palaw used to be like as an example of a typical architectural style of the landowning classes. There were two other houses like this one, though they were in disrepair and much smaller, and the occupying families I knew living in them did not use the wooden upstairs anymore, living instead solely on the ground floors. Despite their grand architectural heritage, the other middle-class families viewed such houses as throwbacks. More common abodes for

the wealthier families were single-storey concrete houses with a garden surrounding them and a wall or railing encircling the plot. The older houses had a low, sloping tin roof, which would be painted, as would the walls, and have railings rather than glass in the windows. Newer houses often looked more like the two-storey, pastel-coloured mansions found in the subdivisions, but were seldom as large or as ostentatious. It is to these houses that I now turn my attention.

The two 'villages' on the outskirts of Palaw were built on agricultural land, one in 1991, the other two years earlier. The latter development, here called Kanluran,²⁹ presented a more typical 'village' layout and aesthetic. This layout incorporates a large mansion near to the entrance where the development owner supposedly lives, adjacent to a small pavilion or hut for the guard. While there exists a clear aesthetic convention for many elements of houses' design in the pastel coloured concrete walls, tall pointed tile roof, and alabaster-style window decorations, this house is often highly unusual. It would showcase architectural extravagances and flourishes not found on other houses in the 'village', much less on 'normal' houses. In Kanluran, for example, the mansion was painted bright peach, featured a balcony, a high-ceilinged front room with tall, arched windows - fitted with glass - that looked out onto the road, and was encircled with a tall wrought-iron fence with gold points at the top (*fig. 4*). Many of these houses also boasted modern conveniences such as private generators - though some of the older houses in the *poblasyon* (town centre) also had these - and air-conditioning (Jesusa's house enjoyed this in one room only).

There were walls roughly 1.5 metres high built around the edge of the village, which separated the development within from the road to the east, a small hamlet on the opposite side and sugar fields in between. The street layout of six parallel roads in the village had been built in advance across the 15-acre plot, dividing the interior into two small cul-de-sac areas near to the entrance on which large houses could be built, and a bigger section of terrace-style rows of streets connecting a series of smaller lots. The roads were of a high-quality, built with concrete, and rather than sloping off into drainage ditches as most roads in Palaw did, were lined by tall curbs and underground sewers, as in an upscale ur-

ban neighbourhood. Finally, Kanluran's typicality extended to the absence of houses from significant parts of the plot. During my fieldwork, there were 16 houses that were fully complete in the development, and one further house under construction, though this remained incomplete throughout my entire stay in Palaw. The remaining plots and the roads connecting them had become overgrown, and the street signs - themselves an unusual feature - had even begun to rust (*fig. 5*).³⁰

The houses themselves bore resemblance both to the houses I had lived alongside in Bulaklak, and to the kind of constructions described in other accounts of houses built by returning OFWs (Aguilar 2009; Aguilar et al 2009; Aguilar 2013). The prevailing style involves Mediterranean features such as terra cotta tiles and rooftop balconies, referencing the locations of migrant work in Italy where many Batangueños did go to work in the 1980s, especially from the Mabini peninsula in eastern Batangas (Aguilar 2009: 100; Katigbak 2012: 99). In Kanluran, however, not all the houses had been built with money from overseas, and those that had were not occupied by an OFW from Italy: instead they were predominantly funded by workers in the Gulf States. The 'Italianate' design of these houses thus represents the standardisation of an architectural style for newly built extravagant houses that is less determined by the source of the building's funding, and more on the cultural mores of the social classes for whom it is built.

The significance of house building by returning migrants has been explored anthropologically as a means through which wealth gained by migration can be displayed to others in order to gain status (Gardner 1995; Ballard 2003). However, houses of international migrants may also act as a means through which established social positions and relations can be maintained, by spatially fostering and reasserting certain kinship relations (Fog-Olwig 1997) or allowing the embodiment of ancestral ties to 'home' (Mand 2010). Filomeno Aguilar's work in the Philippines demonstrates how for Filipino migrant workers, these two kinds of analysis are not contradictory. In Paraiso, his field site in eastern Batangas, houses and their renovation and improvement are a huge aspect of the motivation for migration in the first place, both international and internal, as "the house is not only a physical structure but also a cultural symbol of personhood as well as connected-

ness between members of the kin and the wider social group. In the context of community, the house is crucial to what it means to be a person who possesses a particular social status” (Aguilar et al 2009: 100).

The ways that houses acted as public registers of status in Palaw depended, as I have suggested, on a number of features. One I want to concentrate on is the presence of a gate and wall around the house or compound. The role of ‘gating’, which manifested as two distinct types, presents a window onto some of the socio-economic changes in the constitution of the middle class brought about by remittances and peri-urbanisation in western Batangas. On the one hand, gating and wall-building in ‘villages’ occurred around the outside of the entire development; less so around the particular houses, which rarely consisted of compounds of single-storey multiple houses either. It has been suggested that this represents a particular kind of idealised form associated with a wealthy lifestyle and the arrival of urban culture (Ortega 2012a: 141).

However, gating also took place in some of the pre-1980s houses in the centre of town. During my fieldwork Jesusa’s work on her plot continued, as she renovated the railings in front of her house, making them much taller, and installed an enormous red gate. This, she explained, was to stop people coming inside and asking for money all the time - a complaint she made only half-heartedly. Indeed, the construction of the gate (which remained open most of the day) seemed in some senses a public statement of her status, which not only required her to get a gate to keep petitioners out, but also reaffirmed that fact that she could afford to entertain them. In front of some family compounds in Palaw and Santa Clara, the name of the family was wrought in iron above the gate to the compound, not only stating the capacity to enclose and differentiate its occupants, but also placing the family name in the public realm of the town. For politicians in particular this was commonplace, and I for one was constantly reminded of the political candidacy of several members of the Karunungan family as I walked past their gate in the centre of the town.

Gates, walls and railings could thus be considered significant statements of wealth and status for the 'older' families in Palaw as well, but their gating practices differed significantly from those found in the subdivisions. The subdivision's physical separation was designed to create a divided urban space in which the possibilities of social relations are curtailed. For the compounds in the centre of the town, however, the gates had a different effect. Rather than prevent access, they acted as a kind of advert: since the gate was erected, Jesusa routinely welcomed in distant relatives, friends, colleagues from her Church groups, people petitioning for charitable support, messengers, politicians, vendors, and so on. Gates, rather than closing off social relations, accented the possibility and creation of particular kinds of interaction.

In both of these cases, however, attempts to assert status in this way can lead to social division and conflict. Aguilar's analysis concludes that "the house is a tangible embodiment of tensions and contradictions, foremost being the status of competition and socio-economic stratification in the village in the era of relative prosperity" (Aguilar et 2009: 123). I would agree that this is the case for both the 'migrant mansions', and the older compounds through the social forms they perpetuate. It is important, though, to consider how large houses such as those in Kanluran act as signifiers of the mere presence of *non-redistributed* wealth, which in itself can be threatening to social relations. Concerns over the morality of obtaining and not distributing wealth were not only directed at the owners of large houses, but also corrupt politicians or unscrupulous employers, indicating the suspicion of the individualistic pursuit of wealth noted elsewhere in the Philippines. For the acquisition of wealth through entrepreneurial self-interest, a failure to redistribute or promote 'common good' through one means or another (Cannell 1999: 24) is viewed as problematic.

Anxieties and disgruntlement surrounding the large houses in the subdivision was never particularly vocal, but mutterings were commonplace. The subdivision caused problems partly because many people didn't consider it to be part of the town proper: geographically, Kanluran was the other side of the highway from the centre of Palaw. The problem of separation was also social. Vicki, a tailor at the nearby marketplace, considered the resi-

dents in Kanluran to be somewhat aloof and disinterested in local life: “*talaga, hindi silang nag-aalaga na komunidad, nakahiwalay sila, tingin ko na dapat makasama-sama ng komunidad*” (really, they don’t care about the community, they’re separate, I think the community should stay together). Other complaints addressed the fact that local construction workers hadn’t been employed in building some of the houses, and that they generally lacked generosity towards public works such as *pyesta* (fiesta) celebrations.

Despite these complaints, the most common way in which residents of Palaw criticised Kanluran was through comments about its emptiness. Houses in the *poblasyon* were built almost on top of one another, with structures often overlapping into one another’s lots. Even in the countryside, most people favoured living in compounds of several houses to ensure that there were large numbers of family members and neighbours around all the time. While disputes did arise from such close proximity (complaints about noise and rubbish were common), most people insisted that they preferred living close to their neighbours than being isolated. By contrast, Kanluran’s houses (as in other ‘villages’) almost all stood separately. For most people, this made Kanluran uncomfortably quiet and still, and although many people would often cut through the subdivision on the way to the houses on the opposite side from the town, no one wanted to dwell there very long.

Anxieties about emptiness and large houses, which had become more and more common around Palaw and Santa Clara over the last few decades, were sometimes expressed to me in terms of worries about ‘*multo*’, or ghosts. *Multo* were invisible beings most commonly described as the spirits of the dead, who would stay in the locality where they lived after death, often close to the graveyard in which they were buried. *Multo* often hid in forests and in sugar fields when the ‘*tubo*’ (sugar plants) were very tall in order to avoid places where people lived, as the commotion of humans moving around and making noise were considered disruptive or off-putting for them. Their actions were sometimes described as being directed towards a particular victim or beneficiary, usually known to the deceased (Go 1979: 193), but stories of their incursions into everyday life were more often indiscriminate. Walking or even riding a motorcycle in the countryside after dark (especially

past a cemetery) without a companion with whom you could converse loudly was to invite accidents caused by *multo*.

The *multo* in Batangas seemed to operate in a similar way to the Bicolano ‘*tawo*’ or ‘people we cannot see’ described by Cannell (1999: 83), in that inadvertent contact between humans and *multo* would bring about bad luck, accidents, or sickness, especially in children. For Bicolanos, such uncanny creatures confuse otherwise clear distinctions between the dead and other kinds of spirit: in Batangas, however, I did not encounter the same variation in kinds of spirits described by Cannell, and almost all ethereal beings were described to me as *multo*, except for those with a distinctive mythology of their own, such as the vampiric ‘*aswang*’ or the centaur-like ‘*tikbalang*’, which were far rarer. However, this does not necessarily reflect a blurring of spiritual categories due to ‘demystification’. Nick Long describes how different ‘species’ (borrowing Freud’s terminology) of the uncanny in Indonesia emerge or are privileged at moments of contact between different spiritual orders. In particular, the appearance of ‘*jin*’ at moments of anxiety over the effects of multiculturalism and displacement (as opposed to the disconcerting but familiar ‘*makhluk gaib*’) indicate the need for a historically responsive ‘taxonomy’ of the uncanny (2010: 889).

Other appearances of *multo* in the Philippines suggest a similar emergence as a new (or at least hybrid) ‘species’ responding to wider historical and political change. Their attraction to, or creation by, both incursions of disruptive or dangerous foreign entities and instances of disruption of social relationships across hierarchies is captured in legends surrounding the construction, in 1982, of the Cultural Centre of the Philippines (specifically the Manila Film Centre) at the behest of Imelda Marcos, wife of then-president Ferdinand Marcos. The legend goes that Imelda, in an attempt to expedite the completion of the building, ordered that concrete be poured onto the bodies of workers - and those living workers who had gone to retrieve their corpses - who had been killed when a scaffold collapsed. *Multo*, definitely representing the dead workers, were ever-present after the centre’s opening, even continuing their hauntings to the present day: disembodied arms, legs and heads sticking out of walls being the most commonly reported incidence.

Though the appearance specifically of *multo* here suggests perhaps a flexibility in the use of the term, I want to suggest a more specific interpretation.

Like the *tawo*, *multo* in Batangas did exist alongside humans and were considered to have certain human-like desires, such as that for food and shelter, but also ended up in spaces where similar conflicts over inequality and the violence of capitalism were apparent. Large unoccupied houses, and even those only temporarily occupied or ‘under-occupied’ (in other words, too big for the family living there), were seen as highly attractive to *multo*. Though I never came across it in Palaw, elsewhere in Batangas the practice of ‘enlivening’ houses or even entire neighbourhoods by turning on the lights, TVs, radios, and household appliances in unoccupied houses is considered the best way to make sure one’s home was not invaded by ghosts who would set up residence there in your absence (Aguilar et al 2009: 158). I am also reminded of Adrian Vickers’ account of vacant house in Bali after the New Order massacres in the 1960s. Walking through villages in the 1970s and 1980s, he:

“...was struck by the number of empty house yards in otherwise densely populated villages. I was told that these had been the houses of victims of the killings. After the families were taken to graveyards and slaughtered, the houses were burned down. In Bali these empty living places, *karang suung*, were dangerous, the kinds of spaces populated by ghosts and malicious spirits who could bring misfortune to those around them.”

(Vickers 2010: 46)

I find symmetry in the spiritual vulnerability of Vickers’ ‘empty living spaces’ and the vacant lots in Kanluran.³¹ As the subdivisions were built on plots that landowners previously had leased to farmers to crop sugar, they represented not just a loss of capital if they failed to attract development, but also a loss of livelihoods for the share-croppers (cf. Li 2010).³² Land sale for property development thus also amounts to a ‘cutting off’ of the relations between landowners and tenants (however exploitative), as the link relies on the continuous reciprocal movement of rent, harvested crops and subsistence returns from the

land. In this sense, the land turned into space for housing, covered in roads, and then left vacant, is not just a petrification of agricultural capital, it is a petrification of social relationships, even their death.

When framed as places that, unlike most other built environments in the Philippines, enjoy no animation by the living, no vibrancy from the presence of live humans in relation to one another, the uncanniness of vacant lots and the uninhabited houses of wealthy migrants is made far clearer. Imelda's Cultural Centre also suffers from this kind of socially atrophied state - built as an act of grandiose hubris to host the internationalism of the Miss Universe pageant and an international film festival, the deaths of and subsequent haunting by the construction workers underlined the unsuitability of the building as a human social space.

However, it is important to point out that there was not a consensus surrounding the existence of such supernatural resonances. Many people treated accounts of ghostly activity ambiguously, sometimes dismissing them as '*pamahiin*' (superstition), and at others regarding them as serious. The holding of beliefs that were *pamahiin* was often considered a marker of a lack of education or maturity, a viewed voiced particularly strongly by teachers and students at the ISA (International Science Academy), given that descriptions provided to me of folk beliefs such as *multo* would often involve caveats to the effect that these were stories to scare children, or that only the '*taga-bukid*' (farmers or peasants) actually took it seriously.

The use of 'superstition' once again recalls the cultural contestation of modernity, 'nativeness' and nationalism present both in *ilustrado* products and in the contemporary debates over their history. *Ilustrado* writings, for example:

"...subverted the derision of native superstition and irrationality into glyphs for a lost condition of pre-colonial cultural and material plenitude. This technique did less to transform the ontological status of the 'native' than to construct a new kind of expertise and epistemic authority for Filipino elite nationalists themselves. Fore-

grounding their own creole cultural sensibilities as sources of authority for constructing the imagined community, the early nationalists did not repudiate mestizo privilege, but rather played it into the authority to define which natives were fit to represent the nation.”

(Lahiri 2005: 32)

The dismissal of the *taga-bukid* from the ‘imagined community’ of educated and modern citizens echoes this process. Nevertheless, despite the associations made by the ISA students and teachers, relatively serious expressions of belief in lucky numbers, spiritual explanations for misfortune, and anxieties about the return of the dead (all at some point classified as *pamahiin*) were still common amongst them.

This ambiguity can be viewed as an expression of aspirant identity associated with urbanity and modernity. While the refusal of folk beliefs - particularly those associated with agricultural cosmologies and a lack of educational capital - is perhaps a predictable element of attempts to occupy an ontology that reflects being ‘modern’, the effect here is different. The blurring of distinctions within the pantheon of spiritual entities in Batangas is not an outright refusal of ‘traditional’ beliefs about the dead, spirits and the ethereal, but instead represents the impact of popular urban occults and a reorientation towards historical changes, specifically neoliberalisation of land ownership and housing. This is just one arena in which the complex hybridity of how education, modernity and urbanism were articulated in Palaw became apparent; in the next section, the significance of this kind of articulation is discussed in relation to teachers’ social roles and status.

Modernity and Urban(e) Teachers

‘Modernity’ in the Philippines has often been most clearly displayed and received the most attention via built forms in urban environments, predominantly Manila. Scholarship has traced a historical narrative through different efforts to ‘modernise’ urban space, from the American colonial period, through the Marcos era up until the present day (e.g. Pinches 1994; Shatkin 2004). Modernisation has thus always been a project by which the urban ‘reaches out’ into the rural, a process, according to Arnold Azurin, established by

the political architecture of colonialism. Colonial governance involved the outsourcing of political and economic centres of power (to Manila from Madrid, for example), and a subsequent colonisation of these outposts' surroundings. The contemporary Philippines is seeing a continuation of this process, in which colonialism, modernity and '*Manileño*' urbanism are entangled (Azurin 1995: 67). I have suggested that the 'reaching out' of urban architectural forms might be considered to signal the arrival of cultural forms as well - in this section I explore this link. The majority of the architectural and planning features of Kanluran - the perimeter wall, the predominantly vacant lots, the predetermined road layout - were also present in the smaller development found across the other side of town. However, it is the differences between the two plots, and between them and those in Tagaytay and Manila (and further between the houses built on them and conventional abodes found elsewhere in the town) that provide some indication to their significance for the present analysis.

Kanluran was built across the main road from the market square that abutted the main highway past the town, was a private speculation by a developer in Batangas City. The other development was only 3.5 acres, and the owners lived in a much less ostentatious house by the gate. The management of the property was also very different, as lots - and sometimes ready-built houses - were sold under what was described to me as a 'cooperative' scheme. Rather than having to pay to build the house by yourself once you purchased the lot, a mortgage would be jointly applied for by the entire residential population of the subdivision so as to spread the risk of the bank (in these cases almost always the Agricultural Bank of the Philippines, a branch of which was located in Palaw). Despite this arrangement, individual households always impressed upon me that in practice they never would have to bail out their neighbours.

The affordability of these plots (which nevertheless were still inaccessible to those without a regular income) and the 'cooperative spirit' engendered by shared ownership made the Co-op subdivision a much more vibrant community compared to Kanluran. In the Co-op, more than half of the plots had been occupied, and during my fieldwork several houses for sale (as opposed to those built privately on a purchased lot) were completed. The

houses were not mansions, were built very close to one another (but still detached), and not individualistically designed, instead being functional while alluding to the aesthetic conventions of modern 'middle-class' houses mentioned above (*fig. 6*). The houses in the Co-op were all '*moderno*' or '*makabago*' (modern or up-to-date), and their inhabitants (and those outside the subdivision) distinguished their 'type' of house from that found elsewhere in Palaw and its environs. The families that I knew best in the community were those of three teachers who worked at the high school in Palaw. Two teachers, Ma'am Ekat and Ma'am Ursula, and their families were living in the Co-op when I arrived in Palaw. During the course of my fieldwork another teacher, the unmarried Mr Rey, moved into one of the newly built houses. All three of these teachers taught the fourth year at Palaw NHS, the class I joined regularly on visiting the school.

In this class, roughly 30% of the students came from households where the sole means of regular income came from agriculture, usually from a combination of share-cropping, some land ownership (usually gardens), and seasonal or temporary labour. For many students, therefore, the high school teachers represented one of the few adults that they would encounter who had successfully completed tertiary education and attained a professional job, but had - in some cases - come from similar backgrounds to themselves. Their distinction, however, resulted as much from the attainment of their particular vocational qualification as their initiation into an associated cultural milieu. University attendance, which necessarily took place in an urban centre (the teachers had mostly been trained in Santa Clara or a similarly sized town in the province, though one or two had studied in a major city) was considered - by students, but especially parents - to have offered the teachers a perspective on the world associated with being 'modern'. Teaching at the rural high schools thus represented a kind of 'channelling' of education from urban centres back to the students in the '*bukid*' (countryside). Teachers' wider interactions with students thus took on dimensions that, while reflecting both hierarchical relations formed in the classroom and those conventionally found between the old and the young and the rich and the poor (see chapter 5), also represented an encounter with a representative of modern, urban identity.

One of the manifestations of this mediating role for teachers is their prominence in electoral administration. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) relies on the involvement of three local public school teachers - alongside a representative of the local *sangguniang kabataan* (youth council) - to act as non-partisan administrators to preside over each polling station. Additionally, local Boards of Election Inspectors (BEI) are staffed extensively during elections by those also working in the Department of Education, with school principals taking on supervisory roles and so on. The reasoning behind this is that teachers are uniquely qualified for this responsibility, mostly because of their perceived disentanglement from local political factionalism, achieved through their tertiary training away from the locality where they work. This constitutes an attempt to eliminate the problems of so-called ‘cacique democracy’ (Anderson 1988), whereby local political figures co-opt electoral processes via bribery and coercion in order to establish quasi-feudal dynastic oligarchies, legitimised by the pretence of democratic elections. The expectation that teachers are superior and immune to this kind of ‘traditional’ politics relies on their progressive, modernising credentials, as figures able to elevate the population (especially students) above the clan-like political affiliation as described by, for example, Alfred McCoy (2009), and transform them into rational democratic citizens.

Regardless of whether this model of Filipino politics is accurate, the role of teachers in the attempts to quash it has a discernible impact on perceptions of their cultural significance. However, as histories of this practice have pointed out, since its institution in the 1978 elections by Ferdinand Marcos, the impartiality of the teachers involved in poll inspection could often only be expected to be nominal, for a number of reasons (Franco 2001: 150). The remuneration of teachers for their poll inspecting work is a recurring point of contention on a national scale, with teachers often failing to receive promised pay (of about PHP 3,000) on time. There are also occasional allegations of corruption against teachers who supposedly rig vote counts, are accused of facilitating vote-buying, or are promised extra payments by incumbent officials. Most significant of all from the teachers’ point of view, however, is the risk of violence directed against them. Violence and coercion are well-documented features of the election process in the Philippines (Quimpo 2015: 341-342) and teachers are highly exposed by their prominence in polling

stations and in vote counts. For example, in Taysan, a town in eastern Batangas province, in 2007, a teacher was killed in a fire started by masked gunmen who burned the ballot boxes in her custody with gasoline (Conde 2007).³³

The risk of violence incurred by the teachers in this particular role is in some ways symptomatic of a wider ambiguity towards their position as avatars of a modernising agenda. Teachers' authority as moral and aspirational guides to the possibilities of modernity sometimes sat awkwardly with expectations of the potentially undesirable morals of urban modernism. Some parents mistrusted aspects of teacher's urbane identity, which was also associated with selfishness, greed, secularism and sexual promiscuity (though this may be related to more general concerns about mobility, proximity and distance; see chapter 7). One parent, who owned a *sari-sari* (convenience store) in the plaza, described the effect of university education - citing teachers as prime examples of its victims - as making people more 'liberal'. While identification as 'liberal' more commonly meant loyalty to the political party of this name, I also frequently encountered its use by older generations (younger people rarely used the term) in this way to cast aspersions on the kind of morality of which 'modern' and 'urban' Filipinos were capable. "*Sa mga lungsod*" (in the cities) regularly prefixed a concern about a particular social or cultural change that inhabitants of the peri-urban could see coming, but felt ambiguous about. The effect of education and the professionalisation of the future workforce, as personified by the presence of urbane teachers, was one such worry.

One specific issue on which such anxieties focused was the sexual politics of male teachers' gender presentation, and wider understandings of their responsibilities. In chapter 6, I will discuss how teachers who identified as gay or '*bakla*' did so within a cultural environment in which these categories also indexed class identities, economic niches, and an articulation with historical narratives of modernisation. It was also the case, however, that straight male teachers occupied particular gender roles with a similar set of meanings. The stereotypical construction of the male teacher was as an effeminate, aloof, yet still authoritative character, wearing flashy sunglasses and even carrying a parasol when it was sunny. He owned a new and well-maintained motorcycle, but would not maintain it

himself, and would live in a *makabago* house, such as that found in the Co-op subdivision. Of course, this stereotype failed to entirely capture any of the male teachers at Palaw NHS, but some of these trappings were adopted by teachers. The particular sensibilities associated with a more urbane persona included being 'looked after' by the students, as described in chapter 1, as well as certain consumption habits that distinguished them from other men of a similar age in the town, such as drinking beer rather than brandy (and doing so less frequently), or wearing shoes and shirts rather than sandals and vests outside of work.

This identity was thus gendered in that it was distinct from - or even oppositional to - some normative understandings of masculinity, of how straight men should act. The outcome of this ambiguity meant that male teachers would sometimes receive judgement and criticism of their sexuality and gender from parents or other members of the public who were unhappy with the school. Such attacks represented a means by which critics could call into question their position as authorities over the future of young people (especially boys) and, by extension, the nation itself. However, as with the teachers' importance in the processes of electoral administration, the exposure the male teachers endured by occupying this role also granted them particular kinds of legitimacy and potency for accomplishing their educational roles, which could be transformed into the means by which they defended themselves from attacks. This was partly because their construction of this gendered niche was suggestive of a register of knowledge, experience and cultural capital that - regardless of whether critics considered it legitimate or beneficial - was external and 'beyond' the social environment of Palaw (in chapter 3, the perhaps specifically Filipino ways in which education and the institutions of schooling act to 'domesticate' *Manileño* urban elite power are expanded upon).

These fields of contestation were further illuminated to me by the social roles of Mr Joseph, a teacher whose family lived in Santa Clara, but who had received his teacher training and undergraduate degree in Filipino in Batangas City. Mr Joseph's maintenance of a certain public persona in Palaw reflects the balancing act between the perceived advantages and disadvantages of urbanism. His involvement with other charitable and

Church organisations in Palaw (see chapter 4) meant that he was a prominent figure locally, and frequently when I would see him outside of school he would be accompanied by a retinue of students, often those involved with the student government. The importance of this association became apparent to me at the wake of the principal's grandfather. After school, the teachers had assembled on their motorbikes and made their way to the nearby house. Mr Joseph arrived shortly afterward in his car, transporting his group of six students crammed into the back seat. We all went into the house, and Mr Joseph produced a cassette player and several copies of a communal prayer on Xeroxed sheets. The students took it in turn to lead sections of the prayer, while a selection of hymns and religious popular songs played in the background on the stereo.

After the prayer was complete I cornered Mr Reynald,³⁴ who was also present, to ask him more about why the students had come with Mr Joseph. Mr Reynald smiled and commented that everybody liked Mr Joseph, and that it was good for more people to come to a wake, before he went back to watching the elder men in the family buy Small Town Lottery (STL) tickets. The importance of 'paying one's respects' at the wakes of deceased neighbours is documented elsewhere in the Philippines (Cannell 1999: 137), in order to show that the dead had plenty of friends. I interpret Mr Joseph's actions as engineering a situation in which the positive associations of neighbourly duty fulfilled, was conferred to everyone involved - himself, the students, and the family of the principal. I was to later find out that Mr Joseph in fact sponsored, advocated for and otherwise helped out a number of the students, and considered himself a mentor to some of the more studious amongst this group.

His actions intrigued me as the benefits he was accruing through the acts of mild patronage he conferred on certain students were clear (such as getting the credit for allowing students to pay their respects to the principal's grandfather), and the manner in which he conducted his - and managed his students' - interactions with members of the wider community made it clear that the students could be considered almost as social apprentices to him. As suggested in the previous chapter, Mr Joseph also framed his actions as an indirect guide to students: teachers frequently intoned that they had to "set an exam-

ple”. Outside of the classroom, this demonstrates a way in which ‘imitative pedagogy’ characterised how students and teachers considered their interactions (see chapter 3).

It was through interactions such as this that the relations between students and teachers - at once characterised by socio-economic inequality and the risk of corrupting moral liberalism, and paternalistic responsibility and potential mobility - were (uneasily) negotiated. In some respects the elevated social positions held by teachers in Palaw - who received reasonably well-paid salaried work and enjoyed the social and cultural capital of association with a schooling system that most people agreed to be a positive social institution - were ill-equipped to present their students with alternatives to the neoliberal logics of a contemporary ‘industrial education’. Their productive lives were held up as examples of successful attainment of a more generalised standard of professional work, and in some senses were prototypical of the kind of desirable subject that ‘competitive’ schooling was supposed to produce. They displayed a kind of fractal perfection granted by becoming a self-reproduced quintessence of the possibilities of education itself.

In this way, within the rhetoric of the ‘*bagong bayani*’ (modern-day heroes) coined by former president Cory Aquino to describe migrant workers as self-sacrificers to the cause of national prosperity, the teachers almost became perfect migrant workers, but as exceptions that proved the rule. The narrative is dependent on the idea that workers can offer their value to an extracting ‘foreign’. Teachers, on the other hand, have stayed at home, but also have the kind of educational credentials, professional capital and status (though - usually - not quite the income) that distinguished migrant workers and made them, in the rhetoric of DepEd, competitive. Consequently, teachers occupied a position in which they had sacrificed their competitiveness and associated levels of wealth (i.e. the outcome of successful schooling) to contribute directly to education, an institution widely regarded and often described to me as being ‘for the public good’ (*para sa benepisyo ng lahat*).

It is my argument that schools and teachers acted to institutionalise and render acceptable particular modes of modernisation and urbanisation in Palaw. That many of the younger teachers were resident in the Co-op subdivision is indicative of the balance they needed to

strike to accomplish this project. The legitimization of their role depended on them being both socially involved and morally responsible, in a way that reflected normative relations between the young and the old. Such a balance is demonstrated by Mr Joseph's positioning of himself as both an urbane and modern young educator, and an authoritative patron of the students. In this way the normative roles of the teachers at Palaw NHS reflected a complexity found elsewhere in politics in Batangas: a tension between modernising and transformative effects, and the threat of perceived damage to or atrophy of desirable social relations (such as Mr Joseph's patronage) that may not be perpetuated. How these complexities were negotiated in the face of emergent kinds of religious practice is the focus of the final section.

'Senor Trece Caida' and the 'Santuhan'

As has been noted for other parts of the Christian Philippines (Cannell 1999, 2005; Galang 2012), the importance of devotions to saints was a central facet of religious life in Palaw and Santa Clara. Images of saints are most obvious in two arenas of life, though it is the second of these that most concerns my discussion here. First, they are a commonplace feature of Catholic households.³⁵ Images are usually placed in a prominent position in the living room or dining room of a house, and in more devout households often positioned on a table decorated with paraphernalia including candles, religious texts and other smaller images of biblical stories. The images are usually a small figure about 30-50cm tall, depicting a Catholic saint, though images of Jesus Christ at different stages of His life or stations of the cross were also popular. They are often dressed in brightly coloured and sequinned clothes, and most are made from a combination of wood, plastic and fabric for their clothes. It is possible to buy larger, more expensive and more elaborate images made from plaster or even porcelain, and at large churches there is sometimes a sizeable industry manufacturing a variety of images.

Religious practice surrounding the images was centred on private prayer, though at religious festivals family members in some houses would hold devotional services with many family members, friends and neighbours present. Devotion to a saint would often involve the touching of the image, usually with a hand wrapped in a handkerchief, as this

was said to be '*suwerte*' (lucky), and make the subject of a prayer more likely to come true. Prayers that people recounted to me would usually revolve around petitions to the saint for help of some kind; the most common requests being for financial assistance or good fortune, for profitable returns on some venture, for aid through an upcoming trial such as an exam, or for guidance in making an important decision.

Whereas the relationship between images of saints and land ownership in other parts of the Philippines is close (Cannell 1999: 177), in Palaw and Santa Clara, such an explicit link was never made to me, nor were the images of saints in people's houses capable of the same degree of agency and animation as Cannell describes in Bicol. Greater similarities existed, however, between the second kind of saint I discuss here. These were the processional images used for public devotion and religious celebration. The images of these saints were almost always far larger, many being life-size, and were dressed and decorated more extravagantly than the domestic images found inside houses. These images were kept at churches that were considered their 'home', though they were moved regularly for varying reasons. In Palaw, two images of particular importance were housed at the parish church: a two-thirds life-size wooden image of the dead Christ, lying inside a glass case, and a larger than life-size image of Mary, cradling the crucified Christ, also known as the thirteenth station of the cross. Public celebrations of Easter, Christmas and particularly the saints' days were marked by a '*prosesyon*' (procession) through the *pobalsyon* of Palaw, when the images were transported around the town on a special bier or '*carozza*' (mobile pedestal), pulled by a *jeepney* or truck. Congregants would follow the procession slowly through the town, holding candles. For Christmas and the days of saints, marching bands were also employed to play music for the procession.

The most important and famous image in the area, however, was housed in a special chapel in Santa Clara. This was the '*Señor Tres Caída*' (Third Fall of Christ) statue, a description of the display of which reveals the significance for the present discussion. Made of wood and painted so as to have a pale coloured flesh, the '*Señor*' depicted the ninth station of the cross at which Christ falls for a third time. The image shows the figure of Christ falling face first on hands and knees, with his features turned to the left. He wears

a long red satin robe, replete with gold sequins and embroidery, and a wooden crown of thorns. In the chapel that houses the image permanently, the statue is surrounded by a glass case, with only a small opening near a foot so that devotees can touch the figure. During processions in Santa Clara, a large wooden cross is placed over the shoulder of the image, and it accompanied by two life-size Roman soldiers, also made out of wood and brandishing long spears.

As with other important images of saints in the Philippines, one family oversaw the housing of the *Señor* in Santa Clara (Cannell 1999: 172). I was introduced to the workings behind the maintenance of the *Señor* by Eduardo Bermudez, a middle-aged member of the family and a prominent figure in the local politics of Palaw, who I had first met in his capacity as the officer for human resources at the mayor's office. Eduardo, and the Bermudez family, were a landowning family possessing a number of acres of sugar plantations to the west of Palaw, but the family were no longer involved with the maintenance of the land or the cropping and production of sugar. Instead, many had professional positions in the local government, worked abroad or were, like Eduardo, businessmen or women with interests in a number of small businesses and franchises in Santa Clara and Palaw. Eduardo, for one, had bought a property and franchise for Palaw's first 7-11 convenience store during my fieldwork, but he ran a number of other small retail businesses in the market of Santa Clara, and in the recently completed shopping mall there.

The Bermudez family had been custodians of the *Señor* since it had first arrived in Santa Clara at the end of the nineteenth century. The exact date of origin of the *Señor* was a little unclear, as the arrival of the image was bound to the prevailing belief about the image's potency, namely that it would move around the countryside, visiting people in their homes and conferring good fortune and blessings onto those it came across. Eduardo had a long list of encounters that had been reported to him, suggesting that the *Señor* had ventured a great distance from its 'home' in Santa Clara, perhaps even as far as Saudi Arabia, where he appeared to one man from Santa Clara who came to the chapel in 2011. As such, most explanations of the arrival of the *Señor*, and its current location, refer to this practice, saying "*dapat ni Señor nagbisita ng bahay dito*" (the *Señor* must have visited a

house here). Despite the uncertainty surrounding the figure, and its propensity to wander, the Bermudez family traced their custodianship of the *Señor* unbroken back to the 1890s.

The sponsorship of the images of saints has historically been closely related to political organisation and the consolidation of power in particular families or landowners who, in rural areas, have been the only class capable of raising and maintaining the funds to buy and retain custody of images of saints used in public devotion (Galang 2012: 50). Families who sponsor images have to expend considerable amounts of money maintaining not only the image but also the infrastructure surrounding it, and in providing suitable celebration of the image at particular times of the year. Significant labour goes into preparing for and organising devotions at the time of festivals. For the Bermudez family, these responsibilities encompassed regularly commissioning new clothes for the image, occasionally funding the images' repainting (this last occurred in 1992) and providing the necessary decorations and paraphernalia associated with *prosesyon*. The family would also provide large amounts of food for pilgrims during festival periods. In this way, the *Señor* acted as a locus of seasonal economic activity, especially amongst artisanal labourers, but also occasionally became a focus of collective public work.

A crucial facet of the Bermudez's custodianship of the *Señor* was the almost continual process of constructing the image's own 'house'. According to Eduardo's history of the family, the refurbishing of the site of the chapel had continued uninterrupted throughout the image's life, gradually constructing grander and grander accommodation for it before the contemporary complex of buildings was completed in 2011 (*fig. 7*).³⁶ The *Señor* resided in a cool, airy altar beneath a small tower, faced by rows of pews and incorporating a walkway around the image for visitors to approach. The chapel was well-equipped to accommodate huge numbers of visitors, featured a long partitioned and covered queuing section outside, and an annex in which candles may be purchased and lit, and offerings of food and money may be made during festivals.

Whereas older Catholic Churches in Batangas, including the sixteenth-century Jesuit church in the centre of Santa Clara, diligently attempted to preserve original architectural

features, Eduardo was unapologetic about the number of times the chapel had been torn down and rebuilt in a new form. Eduardo's account of the history of the chapel even went to pains to describe the distinction between the current condition of the chapel and its previous iterations, and between it and the architectural orthodoxies of '*lumang*' (old) Catholic buildings in the Philippines. While the chapel adhered to some conventions of Catholic religious buildings, in its current form, the chapel was striking in its aesthetic similarity to the 'migrant mansions' in the Kanluran subdivision, in particular the 'Italianate' style of sloping tiled roof, white fascia and modernist, minimalistic concrete forms comprising the body of the building.

A prominent feature of the building that was not modern, however, was the large, wooden double door to nave. On my first visit to the chapel, Eduardo explained to me, in English, its significance:

"The door was part of the chapel in 1900, it is the only part of the building that is the same. We kept the door even when the rest of the building was gone, when we built it new. In 2011, the door was *kumpunihin* [renovated] by people here in Santa Clara. People here, in this *barangay* [neighbourhood], are so happy that everything is new again, the whole building is better now. Because the door is much better: the wood has been cleaned and is preserved, and the metal [pointing to the hinges] is new. People are happy to have this new church, but to keep the old too."

Eduardo considered the door essential to the chapel's identity, but his account also described the relationship between his family and the people of the local community. Eduardo was able to remember the particular workers and craftspeople involved in the ritual devotions to the *Señor* in different years, and who lived off the economy generated by the image as a focus of pilgrimage. His awareness of the relationship between his family and the expectations of devotees told of a political reality.

The presence of large numbers of visitors (and during Easter week, the chapel would welcome thousands every day) did not just reflect on the importance of the *Señor*. Visi-

tors to the *Señor* were also visitors to the Bermudez family, as his custodians, but not merely in these terms. Eduardo's aunt, Wendy, lived in a house that sat directly adjacent to the chapel, so that one had to walk through the chapel annex to reach her compound. It was also constructed in the same style as the new chapel, and had been extended and renovated itself in 2011, along with the rest of the complex. Wendy was resistant to my suggestion that the *Señor* was *in* her house, despite the fact that the chapel and her house abutted one another. Despite this, the flows of visitors into her own house, and the incorporation of her kitchen into the production and service of food (to be served to the pilgrims, and paid for by the family) during festivals undoubtedly reinforced links between the Bermudez family and the political status conferred by their custodianship of the *Señor*.

However, custody of important saints and their political power was not easy to claim total control over. The practice of the '*santuhan*', a devotional ceremony held every couple of months in Palaw, showed how the control of saints might be momentarily disrupted, or at least the conferred prestige of ownership distributed. Here I will describe a *santuhan* held in 2013 at the house of Mr Daniel, a teacher at the high school. At a *santuhan*, a procession is conducted from the 'home' of an image, be this a church, chapel, or house of a patron, to the house of a 'host' for the devotion. Mr Daniel had 'borrowed' (*nahiram*) a number of minor images from nearby churches to be processed through his rural *barangay* of Toong, to the east of Palaw, and displayed in his house so that neighbours and family could congregate and perform devotions to a number of figures at once. The figures gathered together were of the Virgin Mary, St Anthony cradling the child Christ, St John the Baptist and the Black Nazarene. The latter was the most important, being a large figure of Christ in black wood carrying the cross, identical in design to a nationally famous figure in Manila. The 'borrowing' of these figures he described to me had later turned out to cost several thousand pesos in donations to their sponsorship, a sizeable portion of Mr Daniel's salary.

The procession was started at the small *barangay* chapel, not far from Mr Daniel's house, and moved along the main road with hymns played from a loudspeaker attached to one of

the ‘*carozza*’. When the procession arrived at Mr Daniel’s house, the statues were taken from their plinths and assembled (alongside Mr Daniel’s own family’s image of Christ) in the porch area of the house, which had been decorated with white and yellow drapes and garlands of flowers. Mr Daniel and his family then revealed a lavish feast, including expensive foods like Coca-cola and pineapple and pasta salads, alongside the usual ‘*kambing*’(goat) stew and rice. The whole *barangay* enjoyed the food, and a little while later some of the other teachers set up a *videoke* machine and sang both English and Filipino pop songs to the audience of neighbours, while others continued to visit the images, pray, and make their devotions.

The elaborate food and drink, expensive decorations and *videoke* machine made this a costly enterprise for Mr Daniel to have embarked upon, and this was even before the price of the images themselves had been considered. Parties like this were unusual for most people living in Palaw, and were especially uncommon in the more remote *barangay* where even the pageantry and gregariousness of local politicians was unlikely to reach. As I knew teachers were often complaining about how tight they had to be with money, I inquired as to where Mr Daniel had got enough to pay for everything, and why he had chosen to spend the money on a *santuhan*. While he was at first evasive about answering me (although he had apparently told this information to others, including his neighbours and the teachers), he confided that his maternal aunt had received a large lump sum of money from her spouse overseas, and had redistributed it to her family members. Mr Daniel had received almost PHP3,000 and said: “*Gusto ko makadala nina Santo dito, para sa mga tao nasa Toong, at para sa pamilya at kaibigan ko. We want to celebrate together*” (I want to be able to bring the saints here, for the people in Toong, and for my family and friends. We want to celebrate together).

The display of images of saints in the Philippines - in particular the phallic Judas of Antique province in the Visayas - has been analysed previously as a potential space for the circumvention or carnivalesque disruption of state power, first of the Spanish colonial state as embodied by the Catholic Church, and then the post-colonial government as embodied by the state censorship board the MTRCB (Cruz-Lucero 2006). However, Deirdre

de la Cruz adopts a more nuanced approach in her ethnographic account of ‘Marianism’ (worship of the Virgin Mary) in New York amongst Filipino diaspora. A pageant she describes included a similar accumulation of saints, all of them the Virgin Mary, from a number of different Filipino diasporas around the world. By specifically privileging New York and the United States as a destination for these global travellers, and by accentuating the distance they had travelled, de la Cruz argues that the pageant celebrating the Virgin Mary’s birthday was involved in the work of creating a ‘world picture’ of international Filipinos was constructed (2010: 465; 2015).

De la Cruz demonstrates how, within a dispersed international diaspora nevertheless capable of sending and receiving to and from one another, Marianism offers a vocabulary or the expression of national identity that can overlook differences in status and wealth (she compares the positions of her wealthy New York informants and a Filipino soldier kidnapped in Iraq). At Mr Daniel’s house, the deployment of saints demonstrated a similarly publicly legible attempt to turn the remitted money he had received into a narrative about his position in relation to others in the community. Through the *santuhan* celebration, both a process of ‘world-making’ and a circumvention of the authority over saints in Batangas was attempted, but was only partially successful. I read the display of the four saints in Mr Daniel’s house as a way of acting as if he were the family custodian of an important saint, and desiring from that performance a kind of transformation into the holder of the particular kind of authority associated with it. This was, however, also an act that reinforced his authority over other symbols. The only people singing English songs at the *videoke* machine were his colleagues from the school, while his neighbours in the rural *barangay* of Toong listened and watched appreciatively. His position as a teacher, and thus a custodian of particular kinds of modernity, was also on display here.

Conclusion

The story of Mr Daniel’s *santuhan*, Mr Joseph’s patronage, and the houses in Kanluran subdivision all suggest aspects of the ‘modern’ identity present in people’s understanding of their changing selves and wider social worlds in Batangas. The way in which ‘modernity’ was seen to ‘arrive’ in Palaw and Santa Clara from the outside means that it is possi-

ble to map it closely onto the ways in which urbanisation also arrived, and to trace patterns of modernisation in terms of urbanisation and, by extension, foreignness. The moral anxiety about wealth, the continuing disparity between poverty and prosperity in the peri-urban, and the tenuous and nerve-wracking structural fragility displayed by empty subdivision lots contributed to uncertainty about the economic effects of modernity, as reflected in the concern over the uncanny effects of changing social and spatial forms. Simultaneously, a similar (though quieter) anxiety gathers around the effects of schooling and particularly professionalised teaching, where the emergence of so-called 'liberal' moral registers may threaten desirable social-cultural norms associated with the rural as opposed to the urban.

However, this is a picture of both conflicting *and* intersecting narratives of social change and continuity, and is characterised, I argue, by moments of hybridisation and the failure of urban forms to impose themselves totally successfully. One arena for such hybridity is in the undoubted conflict between what could be called a 'new' and 'old' middle class in the rural Philippines. This picture, however, is simplistic, as demonstrated by the Bermudez family's interpretation and incorporation of modern urban forms into their existent cultural capital, and the overlapping (though distinct) architectural aesthetics of the 'old' families in Palaw and the 'migrant mansions'. However, as Smita Lahiri (2005) and Caroline Hau (2011) both show, this kind of conflict is not new, and maps onto an already present ideological tussle over the 'ancestral' and 'native' history of the Philippines.

Houses and the built environment thus remain a crucial element of the diverse and unwieldy field of modernisation, and accurately index the ways in which, in Palaw and Santa Clara, it was almost always incomplete. Because, in Batangas, houses and the spaces within the home held ever-present significance for thinking about and reaffirming the relations within a family, the construction and decoration of the home bears responsibility for and witness to the success and prosperity of the entirety of one's relations.³⁷ Hence the extravagance of 'migrant mansions' cannot point solely to attempts to affirm status through aesthetic display, but also indicates the kin connections that stretch overseas, over class divisions, and between rural and urban settings. Some Batangas houses thus consti-

tute a counter to the kind of project that Webb Keane considers to be central to modernity: “to abstract the subject from its material and social entanglements in the name of freedom and authenticity” (Keane 2002: 83).

However, it is impossible to ignore the fact that these attempts to absorb foreignness, urbanism, and neoliberal personhood into familiar systems of economic and relatedness always had their limits. The moral concern surrounding these houses in Palaw, and the absent lots where they were supposed to be, reflected the trouble with adopting spatial forms that were inherently excluding. While Jesusa’s gate and fence were designed to create the spatial divisions associated with the desirable status of the urban elite, but in the end failed to generate the social divisions of Bulaklak village, they were still imposed on the public space of the *poblasyon* and contributed towards a cutting off of the social relations signified by the house.

But considering the presence of this kind of ambiguous outcome of modernisation, how do we account for the actual changes and identification of ‘modern’ forms by people in Batangas? Eric Thompson’s (2007) ethnography of village life and rural-urban migration in Malaysia is helpful in explaining how I would also characterise the relationship between the rural and the urban-as-modern in Palaw and Santa Clara. Thompson describes how in the rural ‘*kampung*’ (village) where he conducted fieldwork, the village came to be framed as a site of absence: absence of the various trappings of urbanism (such as particular kinds of labour, sexualities, and wealth) associated with cities, specifically Kuala Lumpur. However, he is extremely resistant to the idea of framing the movement of people from the *kampung* to the city, and the adoption of various socio-cultural and spatial forms in the village, in terms of a historical change called ‘modernisation’. The failure of such a narrative is its assumption that the dichotomy between the modern and the traditional is a historical given, rather than a (historically, culturally) specific tactic of differentiation, deployed to particular ends at different points (2007: 11).

I have framed the processes of ‘modernisation’ in Palaw and Santa Clara in terms of a geographic relationship between the urban and the rural because this is how they were related to me by people in Palaw, and because it describes the way in which elite political

powers in Manila deployed ‘modernity’ in the contemporary Philippines. But ‘modernity’ also could not be extricated from imaginations of the foreign. In Azurin’s (1995) model, urbanism becomes a conduit for neocolonial and, as the state is remodelled for the purposes of new economic orders, neoliberal ideology. However, the discrepancies between a totalising urbanism and the reality of lived experience across the various social fields I have described in this chapter indicate that the temporal claims of modernisation and the geographic model through which they are expressed are not perfectly matched. Thompson states that “the temporal metaphors of modernity and the geographic metaphors of urbanism are very closely related (at least in Malaysia) but they are not the same” (2007: 12). They are so in the Philippines, too. His argument is that both the geographic and the temporal narratives are ideological, oversimplifying the kinds of phenomena discussed here into a ‘rural is to urban as traditional is to modern’ schema.

Instead, Thompson suggests that in Malaysia that “Kuala Lumpur-and-*kampung* are simultaneously differentiated, bound together, and ultimately a system of meaning and practice that exceeds the sum of these places” (*ibid*: 4). The points of impact in the peri-urban spaces of Palaw and Santa Clara are moments of creative social production, that point towards novel negotiations of power. Such negotiations are well documented in the work of Vicente Rafael, though pertinent here is his discussion of the deployment of Spanish language (2006), cultural products and the co-option existing government and religious bureaucracies by the *ilustrado* nationalist movement. While their attempt was characterised by an often-clever reinterpretation of Spanish cultural products, and subtle renegotiation of power with Spanish colonial governance, they ultimately failed to rid themselves of the elitist governmental forms of colonialism (Lahiri 2005; cf. Kramer 2006), eventually relying on popular peasant movements and the wider decline of Spanish empire to win independence. The question here addresses the effectiveness of this authority: can the neoliberal forms of walled subdivisions be ‘domesticated’ and overcome with greater success?

As the following chapters begin to focus more closely on answers to this question, I will return to the Palaw National High School and the International Science Academy. I have

discussed in this chapter how teachers have to delicately straddle competing and uncomplimentary kinds of authority in order to establish both the legitimacy of the educational project and their own moral security. In the next chapter, I consider education and schools as sites of peri-urbanism and modern hybridity in more depth. However, I also seek to introduce how the negotiation of power within the problematic and incomplete modernising project of schooling adopts forms that are specific to the Philippines, and in particular those associated with the transformative effects of performance.

Chapter 3

'Mr & Ms STEP 2012':

Performance, language and transformation in a school pageant

Introduction

At Palaw National High School (NHS) in western Batangas it was common, on mornings that I had expected to spend just attending classes, for there to be some activity or event organised that fell outside of the boundaries of the curriculum. The school was located not far outside of the *poblasyon* (town centre), close enough for me to walk there in the morning, but still surrounded on all sides by sugar fields. Usually I would head up the hill towards the school buildings greeting the students I knew and go to find one of the teachers, depending on whose class I was to attend, but my plans to get to grips with what English classes involved or observe usage of science equipment that day were often usurped when I was informed that the timetable for some students was postponed for a special occasion of some kind, or the day was to be devoted to a project beyond the scope of regular classes.

I was surprised at the frequent deviations from the curriculum as the Department of Education's prescriptive and detailed class schedule did not, at first glance, allow much flexibility for the independent initiatives of teachers. The less than strict adherence was not explained to me in terms of defiance or disagreement from the staff, however; rather the teachers explained it in practical terms. Due to the lack of resources for following curricula to the letter, students' and teachers' time at school was often given over to projects and activities for which materials or know-how was actually available.³⁸ The beginning of the school year 2012-13 at Palaw NHS was particularly strained in this regard, as the new K+12 curriculum had been instituted but the textbooks and materials had not yet arrived from the Department of Education, nor had all the teachers had the opportunity to complete their updated training in the subject matter.

The upshot of this was a rejuvenation of the vigour with which teachers and students pursued extra-curricular projects. This chapter begins with an account of my involvement in one such project: a pageant competition organised by teachers and contested by students at the high school. Analysis of this event and its performative aspects (which I emphasise and focus upon) demands comparison to other instances of public performance and ‘pageantry’ in Palaw and the wider Philippines. I will consider how the state-sponsored project of public schooling is actually achieved (or how it fails), and discuss what is revealed about the multiple projects of social (re)production represented by and accomplished in the school setting.

In particular, and given the practical difficulties faced by teachers and students in public schools, I am interested in what relationship can be discerned between the social, political and economic realities of schooling and the transformative power of ‘education’ that surrounds and exceeds it. By this I mean to ask whether the value of schooling for people in Palaw lies not only in its economic potential (which was constantly attributed to it by students and teachers alike), but also in its provision of a performative arena or outlet for the theatricality of personal transformation that ‘education’ represented. In looking at the precise mechanics of what I have called ‘imitative pedagogy’ in previous chapters, I examine how this transformative power is manifested in particular kinds of interaction and performance, and especially the role of English speech within them.

Mr and Ms STEP 2012

In late 2012, while I was chatting to two third-year students in the shade of the trees that lined the road leading up to the school, my plans for the day were interrupted. I had been aware that some fourth year students had been preparing projects for participation in that year’s national ‘Student Technologists and Entrepreneurs of the Philippines’ (STEP) competition for some weeks, but had not found out exactly what form the contest would take until this particular morning, when I was approached by two teachers, Ma’am Lina and Mr Joseph, who wanted me to judge the students’ work. The STEP competition, held annually across the Philippine schooling system (public and private) for ten years previously, was organised to allow students and schools to showcase their talents in the subject

areas covered in the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) section of the curriculum, by competing in judged challenges with other schools. Each school, to select their entrants to regional finals, held the first round of the competition internally. It was for this preliminary stage that I had been asked to assess the potential participants. STEP was founded in 2001 and run by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), a branch of the Department of Education (DepEd), and aimed to encourage students to ‘showcase’ the technical skills learned within this part of the curriculum.

TLE classes, attended for four hours per week, comprised roughly 10% of final-year students’ school schedules, only marginally less time than was spent on the core topics of English, maths and science. The inclusion of these classes is a key example of the increasing prominence of vocational and work-related content in the public high school and elementary curricula, and is driven by an explicit desire to frame successful schooling in terms of graduates’ employability and labour produced. DepEd claims that the TLE curriculum “provides pupils and students with practical experiences, technical know-how, and opportunities in home economics, agricultural technology, industrial arts, entrepreneurship and ICT integration while developing their leadership abilities and personal skills, and building wholesome character to strengthen national competitiveness and productivity” (Department of Education 2006).³⁹ TLE is studied in all four years of high school, and the content of the course is supposed to be wide-ranging and highly technical, covering: agriculture and fishery arts; home economics (incorporating beauty care, cooking, childcare and textile and handicraft manufacture); industrial arts (meaning graphic design); information and communication technology (including entrepreneurship and business studies); wood and metalwork; appliance electronics; and electrical and automotive engineering.

While the contests at the regional level would encompass specialisms that reflected the breadth of the TLE curriculum (events included circuit-welding, dress-making, assembling children’s wooden furniture, and cocktail-mixing), the only category that Palaw would enter was ‘business planning’. This was because the organiser Ma’am Lina’s own area of interest and expertise was business studies, as covered in her degree in IT. The

project required preparation by eight competitors; two students, a boy and a girl, from every grade in the school. While I had been aware of the students in the fourth-year classes working on a project for this program prior to the day of the competition (involving writing a CV and learning a little about accountancy and business management), I had not realised the lengths to which many students had gone to make other preparations outside of school, nor manner in which the students would be selected. I had anticipated that the contest would be based on an essay or a presentation of some kind, but as preparations developed throughout the morning, it became clear that I would be judging something more elaborate.

The competition was held on the raised concrete pavilion next to the basketball court: younger girls had been sweeping the stage all morning, a neatly arranged table for the judges to sit at had been laid out, and Mr Reynald, the music teacher and compere for the event, had been overseeing the set-up of the school's enormous PA system. At the rear of the stage paper letters had been stuck over the top of the school's mural to read: 'STEP: Upgrading Skills, Improving Lives' and 'Theme: Celebrating 11 Years of Inspiring STEP'. On the prize display next to the table at which I was seated there were two shiny plastic trophies and certificates for the winners, and two silk sashes emblazoned, in glittery letters, with the words 'MR STEP' and 'MS STEP' (see *fig. 8*): the competition was to be run in the style of a beauty pageant. These prizes, while hugely elaborate, were not official awards - they had been obtained specially by the school for the contest. Mr Joseph and one other teacher were my fellow judges, and I was provided with a score sheet, prepared by Ma'am Lina, that informed me of the criteria (equally weighted) that I was to look out for in the students performances: poise and personality, attire, question and answer performance, and audience impact.

After almost the entire student body had gathered on the basketball court in front of me, we were ready to begin. The event was introduced in bombastic style by Mr Reynald on the microphone, employing the lilting, crescendo style of an announcer at a boxing match to introduce the event: "*Maganda maganda magandang hapon! Mabuhay, mabuhay sa lahat atin, sa Mr and Ms STEP 2013!*" (Very very very good afternoon! Welcome, wel-

come to all of us, to Mr and Ms STEP 2013!). After the cheering and applause had died down, everyone present sang the national anthem, accompanied by the school's 'mini-band' playing lyre-shaped glockenspiels, while the competitors lined up next to the stage. Each student's first round performance involved their entrance onto the stage, followed by a 'walk' along a predetermined path that allowed them to criss-cross in front of the judges and strike a pose at the corners of the stage, in order to best be seen by the now thronging crowd of their classmates on the basketball court. They were backed by pop music played over the PA system as they paraded back and forth, which, once they reached front and centre at the climax of the walk, died away and a microphone was handed to them. They would then make a short address to the crowd, introducing themselves by name and saying what class they were from, naturally eliciting wild yelps and cheers from their classmates from the same grade.

My job at this stage was to assess their poise, personality, and attire, as well as audience impact.⁴⁰ The students were not wearing their normal uniform, but had changed into business attire. Most girls were wearing suit jackets or cardigans and blouses, with a pencil skirt and teetering high heels, as well as being heavily made up. Extra effort had gone into styling hair, beyond even the standard devotion to keeping it sleek, straight and shiny black. I subsequently discovered that some of the jackets had even been made specially by one of the tailors in the town, indicating the surprising (to me, at least) effort, time and money that had gone into the pageant. The girls concentrated very hard on their walks, and showboated a great deal less than the swaggering and more confident-looking boys. For them, business attire meant a two-piece suit, a shirt, a tie, and extremely polished shoes, often with an enormous lift in the heel. Unlike the tailored efforts of the girls, most boys had borrowed suits from cousins, uncles and elder brothers, and as a result the suits of the younger boys, aged 11, were almost comically ill-fitting. Despite the more suave and handsome fourth-years drawing squeals and giggles from the girls in the audience when they struck their poses, the most vocal and hysterical reactions were for these younger boys, especially those who performed being '*pogito*' (an infantilisation of '*pogi*', meaning cute or handsome) with more panache, with winks, finger-frames suggesting photography (on which more below), and cheeky nods to the audience.

Despite the variations in audience response and tone of the different performances, a consistency between the efforts of the boys and girls was their use of props. Most of the competitors carried their own or one of the teachers' laptops with them through their walk, or held a binder under their arm. When they reached the corners of the stage, they would strike a pose and, propping up the laptop or binder on their arm, open it to display a blank screen or stack of papers to the audience. Some of the students even shared laptops, switching over as one exited and the other entered the stage. The laptops were not used again in the competition, but the students who carried folders or binders would use their contents in the next round, which simulated an interview for a job.

In round two, each student would take it in turns to select a piece of paper from a bowl with one of the judges' names on it. They would then approach the judges' table and present us all with their folder, before taking a seat opposite us. Inside the folders was a word-processed job application for a fictional position, invented by each student, and an outline of a business plan or project they had conceived (it was this aspect of the competition that I had been aware of the students preparing previously). The jobs they had invented to be considered for were mostly for big companies, were professional positions, and required university education. To bridge this gap in their CVs the students had all projected a potential future for themselves, beyond graduating from high school and university, and some had also incorporated other work experience. For example, Patrick, a fourth-year student, had written an educational history that had him graduating from Palaw NHS in 2013, then studying civil engineering at the Batangas State University (BSU) for four years. 'Now', he was applying for a job at a construction firm. The document was headed with a description of why he had selected this profession: his enjoyment of art projects. Other students had written similar prospective narratives, following high school graduation with a degree relevant to a particular profession, often based on their favourite class in high school.

After examining the 'application', we had to ask the candidates a question, in English and through the microphone, about their suitability for the job. I had been uncertain about how this would work for two reasons. Firstly we, the interviewers, did not know what

company we were supposed to be from until we opened the job applications, and secondly none of us, including the students, had much of an idea about civil engineering, journalism, accountancy, or any of the other careers the students had selected. Fortunately I was able to follow the lead of Mr Joseph, whose name was first out of the bowl. His question was asked in a slow and deliberate tone to give him the best chance of understanding, and was extremely generic. He passed the student the microphone across the table, and his answer, while well pronounced and clear, was similarly vague: “Why will you be a good worker for the company?” The student answered, “I will be a good worker for the company ... [pause] ... because I am a hard worker.”

It was this aspect of the competition that Mr Joseph had considered me particularly appropriate because, in his view, “*ang kaalaman ng interbyu sa Ingles ay importante para sa mga estudyante, lalo na porener ang matatanong*” (the experience of an interview in English is important for the students, especially if a foreigner is asking the questions). My concern that most of the students, who would be happy to converse with me in Tagalog, would not be able to answer me, even if they could understand, seemed to be beside the point. However, it became apparent that lengthy answers were not expected, and the emphasis was on clarity, pronunciation and speed of response. I was, needless to say, less skilled at eliciting the kind of answer the students were prepared to give, and my questions tended to stump the interviewees or cause them to mumble, a situation made worse by their classmates giggling (though whether this was for my performance or the contestants, I was unsure). Dancel, a fourth-year student who had applied for a job at an accountant’s firm, gave the most impressive answer to one of my questions (what is the most important talent you will need for this job?) and instead got appreciative murmurings from the crowd: “The most important talent I will need is to know math. I am good at math and I want to have a job like that.”

After the interview round had been completed, Ma’am Lina tabulated the judges’ scores, and the winners were announced. Dancel and Patrick emerged as the winners, aided in the smoothness of their performances by the extra year of English tuition they had over the other competitors, as well as the physical maturity to pull off wearing business attire

without accidental comedy. They went on to the regional finals in Batangas City in January 2013, but did not progress any further in the competition.

Schooling and the Economy of Pageantry

I had initially considered the pageant, while clearly fascinating from an ethnographic point of view, to be merely recreational from the perspective of the teachers and students, organised by Ma'am Lina as an extra-curricular project to entertain the students that did not have any direct educational value. However, when I asked her and the other teachers, they were adamant that the pageant had to be taken seriously. She was keen to impress upon me that the skills taught by the TLE course were important for students aiming to get jobs after graduating, and that the pageant and the associated lessons (preparing a job application and completing classwork on interviews) contributed to these skills. Dancel, the contest winner, reproduced this view, but was more specific about the connection between this exercise and her prospects after graduation:

CM: *"Bakit ginawa ninyo ng contest?"* (Why did you all do the contest?)

Dancel: *"Kasi, mabuti ang mag-praktis ng interbyu, para makapagtrabaho. Wala kaming pagkakataon matuto ng mga interbyu sa kumpanya, dahil maganda ang makapapraktis."* (Because, its good to practice an interview, to be able to get a job. We don't have the opportunity to find out about interviews at companies, so being able to practice is good)

CM: *"At, paano pinili mo ang trabaho sa aplikasyon mo?"* (And, how did you choose the job in your application?)

D: *"Kasi, kapag matrabaho ako sa kumpanya, matupad ang aking mga pangarap. Gusto ko ang magandang kinabukasan, siguro mag-abroad, parang na mga poren-er, kaya sinulat ko ang pangarap ko."* (Because, if I work at a company, that would fulfil my dream. I want a good future, maybe going abroad, like foreigners, so I wrote my dream)

The exercise of producing and then assessing these documents is an example, par excellence, of the kind of action that goes into everyday 'aspiration management' (Davidson

2011). While the students made constant references to their '*pangarap*' (dreams), the pageant's expected orientations towards 'business skills' meant that they did not deviate from the linear aspirational trajectory that would send them to college, then into a well-paid profession. Not all the students found imaginative aspects of this exercise in aspiration to be convincing, and the more sceptical attitude to the kind of 'aspiration management' maintained by some demonstrated the structural limitations of the pageant and its underlying assumptions about aspiration. While the responses of most of the students to the pageant itself were positive, stressing the humour and enjoyment of watching their classmates perform in this way, others were more cynical. Frank, a student in the lowest tier class in the fourth year, had participated in the lessons preparing for the pageant, but was not convinced of their value. His *pangarap*⁴¹ was not to get a job abroad for a big company, but to be a dance instructor while remaining in the Philippines, and thus did not see the material being taught as relevant to him or his future. Consequently, he was also somewhat dismissive of educational value of the pageant itself for the audience, saying "*masasaya lang, hindi kaming natuto tulad sa klase*" (it is just for fun, we didn't learn like in class).

Despite this, as a talented dancer Frank was involved throughout my fieldwork in public performances in Palaw, many of which were sponsored by DepEd or organised as fundraisers for the municipality's public schools. Public talent shows including public school students were often presented to me as (and likely designed to be) vindication of educational institutions and government investment in schooling. Frank did not think that going to school had taught him to be a good dancer, having learned from copying moves from television, online and from older boys who also danced, though he readily accepted the importance of public performance as a means through which the value of schooling could be conveyed, and was even grateful for the opportunities for practicing and exhibiting his talent that schooling afforded him.

In his scepticism, Frank is drawing attention to the slippage, identified by Sarah Billings in her analysis of beauty pageants in Tanzania, between the rhetoric of education used in pageantry and the actual outcomes of schooling. Though her ethnography covers more

professional and urban(e) pageants than that held in Palaw NHS, she notes that “in contestants’ speeches ... education becomes a discursive tool, powerful because it touches on the way people conceptualise hope, success, opportunity, and mobility ... While sometimes pointing to real obstacles to securing an education, the speeches rarely reflect on the dead ends even highly educated people encounter ... education itself is never questioned as a means to an end” (Billings 2011: 300).

While my emphasis in this thesis thus far has been on the ‘real obstacles’ students and teachers encountered when learning and teaching in the public school system, it is important to note that many students’ educational attainments were still impressive. Most notably in speaking and reading English and in understanding arithmetic, the majority of students understood and were confident in the material taught, and a small minority achieved an excellent grasp of English, in particular. These achievements were made in spite of the lack of resources and the frequently challenging environment at the public school, and many students displayed an impressive stubbornness and enthusiasm for studying in the face of such difficulties. My focus on the effort expended on pageantry and the underperformance of schools reflects teachers’ and students’ (like Frank’s) own accounts of and thoughts about schooling. In most such reflections, aptitude in English, mathematics and other subjects was seen as necessary *but not sufficient* for ‘educational success’: pageants and performative achievements were required for the broader social legitimation and acceptance of the success of a school. In this way, schooling occupied both a structural relationship to the anticipated ‘human economy’ of skilled labour, and the discursive role identified in pageant speeches by Billings.

All of this served to raise awareness of and interest in the activities of local public schools, eliciting commentary was often critical of the schooling system. In the tertiary college where I conducted research alongside that in Palaw, I encountered some cynicism regarding the ‘spectacles of education’ by public schools. The director of the culinary school there was especially dismissive of the abilities of many publicly educated students when they arrived at the college, and when I mentioned a singing competition that had been organised recently at Palaw National High School, he opined that “that is all the

public schools really do. They don't have money, they don't have books, so what do the students, the kids, do all day? They just get ready for the next official to come, or the next fiesta. And that is how people think of them. If the kids do a good show, then everyone will think, that is a good school".

Despite the lamentations over school quality expressed in critiques of apparently vapid educational spectacle, the situation is further complicated by the material economies of such performance. In the STEP competition, prizes for the students and the school were not insubstantial if they were to progress further, with money and educational materials awarded to national finalists, and even grander rewards for the eventual winners. Even local talent contests offered essential opportunities for swelling school funds. In 2012, the mayor of Palaw decided that part of the municipality's education budget would be allocated to institutions on the basis of a talent competition between the schools in the area. Palaw NHS won P25,000, thanks to students placed in first and third, a sum amounting to a far from insignificant portion of the school's budget that went towards a new toilet block and music equipment. The 'soft' effects of regional promotion cannot be overlooked either. The attention to the quality of schools (and particularly comparing public and private schools to each other), reflects Nick Long's field site in Riau, where schools and their '*facilitas*' (facilities) became crucial registers not only of the success of the students, but also the region itself in its attempts to gain governmental recognition of provincial autonomy (Long 2011: 50-51). In Long's account, too, the role of '*lomba*' (pageants) was crucial in the public's assessment of schools, as the success of students reflected very closely the perceived value of the institution (*ibid*: 48).

These diverse perspectives on the performance on educational spectacle and the different kinds of value it negotiates give rise to a number of questions. Given the supposed importance of the competition, both in terms of financial reward, educational value, and even the fulfilment of students' 'dreams', why did Ma'am Lina consider the performative form of the pageant - interpreted and experienced by many as flippant or 'just for fun' - as the appropriate way to select students for future rounds? Also, considering how genuine the beliefs were that the pageant reflected a reality of employment practices, and that it

would prove useful to students, to what extent did this event represent, or perform, the success of the educational project as a whole? The remainder of this chapter explores possible answers to these questions.

Performance, Pageantry and 'Foreignness'

In order to contextualise some of my questions, it is important to place the Mr and Ms STEP 2012 pageant in relation to pageantry and performance in the Philippines outside of the school setting, and examine what ritual and performative forms Ma'am Lina, the students, the competitors, the judges, and myself were all drawing on in creating the pageant. Beauty pageants and talent contests are immensely popular public events in the Philippines, with the largest national and international competitions attracting massive TV audiences, sponsorship, and wider media coverage. During my fieldwork, the story of the International Miss Universe pageant in which Filipino model Janine Tugonon came second was avidly followed by my informants and in the national press, and Tugonon became an overnight superstar. Pageants are held on much smaller scales across the country, with 'Miss' competitions held for cities, regions, and *barangay*; workplaces, universities, particular college courses (Tugonon was a former 'Miss Pharmacy' at Santo Tomas university in Manila), and also, following large scale migration from the Philippines, diaspora.⁴²

Most smaller towns, like Palaw, and their *barangay* usually only held a pageant as part of their annual *pyesta*, but I doubt anyone growing up there would have managed to avoid going to one, as popular and well attended as they were. Beauty pageants would always include a 'talent' section, but less grand and more economically accessible 'talent shows' for singers and dancers - such as that run by the daytime TV show 'Its Showtime', which played seemingly non-stop every afternoon in house in Palaw - were more regular and at least as well attended. Competing children and teenagers were popular features of such shows, and DepEd and the local school boards often organised fundraisers and inter-school competitions for talented singers and dancers, which were well attended and enjoyed by the wider public. Though I made no concerted effort to study beauty pageants and talent shows specifically, throughout my fieldwork in Palaw and Santa Clara, I at-

tended at least twenty (and judged a further two) pageants and talent contests in a number of different contexts, featuring varied demographics of attendees and competitors.

While ethnography of the Philippines has aligned with common feminist critiques levelled at pageants elsewhere in the post-colony concerning the ‘imprinting’ of European standards of beauty onto Filipino women (Illo 1999; Oza 2001; Rondilla and Spickard 2007), much more focus has been given to gay, or transvestite, beauty pageants and the contributions to understanding gender and sexuality in Southeast Asia - and in gender theory more generally - that can be made through their study. Analyses of gay beauty pageants and ‘*bakla*’⁴³ identity have critiqued the applicability of orthodox constructions of gender to the Philippines (Garcia 2000: 270), and have followed scholarship on the region which insists on the centrality of power and prestige to gender’s local formulations (Errington 1990: 58).

Notable anthropological contributions to this literature include Fenella Cannell’s (1999) analysis of gay beauty pageants in Bicol, and Mark Johnson’s (1997; 1998) work with ‘*bantut*’⁴⁴ Taussugs in Sulu, in the southern Philippines. In Cannell’s work, the dominant theme is the engagement with ‘beauty’, and her analysis examines how it is procured, cultivated and deployed by *bakla* (1999: 203). In Sulu, *bantut* similarly “purvey” and “create” the symbolic capital of femininity and beauty (Johnson 1997: 12, 221). These usages of the idioms of love and ‘*biyuti*’ (beauty) are as “a protective layer, a covering of status which shelters those who have it” (Cannell 1999: 213) from the stigma usually reserved for gay and transvestite Filipinos, though their position is precarious and any reduction in vulnerability fleeting, particularly if they are considered ‘vulgar’ in their attempts at beauty (Johnson 1997: 230; Cannell 1999: 223).

Of interest to my own analysis of pageants are the arguments that Johnson and Cannell give for understanding how pageant performers negotiate their influence and potency in relation to externally located power. For both Cannell and Johnson, the idea of beauty is not defined by the *bakla* or *bantut* themselves, but is created and held elsewhere. Cannell pinpoints images of saints and Filipino film stars as models of beauty that are distanced

from the lives of rural *bakla* in Bicol, though it is on American and, to a lesser extent, Chinese mestiza fashion, performance and aesthetics that *bakla* beauty, in particular, is based (1999: 206, 222). Through work as beauticians, hairdressers, and performers of American pop songs, *bakla* derive power through being “very clever at imitating things” (*ibid*: 216), even if they are remote. Similarly, some consider *bantut* to be endowed with special capacities for seeing and acquiring ‘American’ beauty and style through media consumption (Johnson 1997: 197-201), and then reproducing it through pageant performance.⁴⁵

While Johnson positions his ethnography more squarely within theories of post-colonial globalisation (particularly in regard to his Muslim informants perceptions of American geopolitical power) and relationally constructed gender (1998), Cannell attempts to situate *bakla* practice and identity within Benedict Anderson’s (1972) theories of Southeast Asian potency and politics, and to historicise beauty pageants within the Philippines by drawing on the work of Reynaldo Ileto (1979) and Vicente Rafael (1988). Ileto and Rafael show, respectively, how in nineteenth-century political movements and the interactions between sixteenth-century Tagalog peoples and Spanish colonisers, hierarchical and typically economically unequal relations manifested themselves emotionally as a relationship between the ‘*loob*’ or ‘inside’ of a person - a facet of their person that is only created in continuous interactions with others. In these encounters the *loob* of the individuals emerges and meets in a creative contact, where “begging and the acceptance of food, shelter and protective care create, not a subordinate-superordinate relationship, but a horizontal one akin to love ... things are, in fact, turned upside-down - the debtor is the man of power” (Ileto 1979: 230). From this comes the ‘deep’ Tagalog for performance and pageantry, ‘*palabas*’, which literally means ‘putting outside’.

Cannell’s application of Ileto and Rafael’s insights to contemporary Bicol - following Benedict Anderson’s employment of ancient models of Southeast Asian politics to modern-day Indonesia (1972; Cannell 1999: 9) - argues that the concerns of her informants lie with “*transformation* from states of greater hierarchy, distance and asymmetry between persons to states of greater balance, intimacy and harmony” (1999:228, emphasis in orig-

inal). In this formulation, pageants must be understood in terms of the arrangement of meeting points with powerful alterities, where *bakla* seek to become “lodging places for potency” (Errington 1990: 46)⁴⁶ extracted from the ‘other’ in an effort to mediate the experience of unequal power relations between American pop stars or wealthy cultural elites (Cannell 1999: 223).

Such readings of gay pageants in the Philippines incited my curiosity into whether insights into their significances and symbolisms offer any analytic directions from which to understand the Mr and Ms STEP 2012 pageant, and there are certainly aspects that appear transferable. It is important to consider the dynamics of ‘foreignness’ at play, invoked in triplicate by my presence as a judge, the significance of ‘*malaking kumpanya*’ (big business) as the focus for future employment, and the use of English as opposed to Tagalog (or even Taglish) for interviewing (I return to the issue of language below). The first two of these are closely related, given Mr Joseph’s rationale behind asking me to judge the student’s contributions to the competition. When I pushed him on why my involvement would be good for the participants, it was explained in a matter-of-fact manner that being able to speak English confidently under pressure, and being able to deal with ‘foreigners’ more generally were so obviously desirable abilities that it was a huge advantage for the students to experience them in high school, long before they would have to in their adult lives.

In enlisting me for this role, Mr Joseph was explicitly drawing upon my ‘foreignness’, which was forced into play during the contest (and throughout my research) in two ways. My tall and white-skinned appearance were the most obvious (and most often remarked upon) register of my foreignness for people in Palaw, but more significant in this instance was the implied association between myself as English-speaking and educated and the similar repertoire of cultural capital referenced through *malaking kumpanya*. The foreignness of the capitalistic class, who speak English and who have received good educations, and their rule over an alienating domain of professional employment, was a more significant locus of difference between the students and myself. Thus my concern that

most of the students, who would usually be happy to converse with me in Tagalog, would not be able to answer me, even if they could understand, seemed to be exactly the point.

Mr Joseph's assertion that the experience of being interviewed by a foreigner was especially important could thus be read as a pragmatic reference to the economic reality of seeking a professional position: if one were to work overseas, the expectation is that your potential employer would be a foreigner, and even if one were to seek employment at a large firm in Batangas City, Manila, or one of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in nearby Cavite, there would be a reasonable chance of having a Korean or Japanese boss. However, the atmosphere and sensibilities of the pageant audience and competitors suggest a more complex explanation. While a singular interpretation of the pageant as a moment that manifests a student's and my own *loob* in order to equalise our unequal positions is obviously unsatisfactory, the potential of my presence and the vulnerability of the interactions bear comparison to the pageants in Bicol and Sulu. Rather than the ability to imitate American pop songs and pale skin, however, the symbols on display were the professional suits, technological artefacts and linguistic registers of the successful entrepreneur.⁴⁷ My presence as a judge perpetuated an imagination (though not an inaccurate one) of the global labour economy in which the precariousness of the Philippines - and the students - can only be avoided through an adherence to the habitual registers (such as poise and attire) of an international capitalistic class.

Concomitantly, it was anticipated that I would have a pedagogical interaction with the competitors, as well. As discussed in previous chapters, the 'imitative' mode of interactions between teachers and students involved teachers occupying particular kinds of role to be emulated by students. Because I was considered by Mr Joseph to be capable of a particularly convincing performance of professionalism or English language aptitude, the students had an opportunity to interact with me and potentially 'imitate' these facets of my performance. However, as is revealed by comparison with *bakla* performance, the success of this interaction is not premised merely on successful 'mimicry'; rather, the aim is a 'domestication' of the external source of potency, allowing it to be harnessed and ma-

nipulated in a newly created realm, which in turn offers the possibility of personal transformation.

This process is illuminated by the allusion to photography and self-portraiture through ‘finger-framing’ in the pageant, as photography has particular historical resonances with other instances of transformative ‘performances of the self’ in the Philippines. Doing a ‘finger-frame’, usually performed when posing for a photo, involves spreading the thumb and forefinger into a V-shape, and holding it against or under the face, framing the chin. Though used less ironically by teenagers of both sexes, it was most often used elsewhere to tease those being shy or who were overly modest about their beauty. Adult women in particular would tease girls and boys by holding the finger frame to the child’s face and crying ‘*pogi*’ (handsome) at boys or ‘*ganda*’ (beautiful) at girls. Vicente Rafael suggests that understandings of photographic portraiture (produced for keepsakes and tokens of affection to send to loved ones) amongst the Filipino middle classes in the early twentieth century, viewed photography as a way of ‘unhinging’ the performance of the self from its context, enabling a multiplicity of interpretations and “reiterat[ing] the sense of contingency that underlines appearances” (2000: 99). The simulation of photography in the pageant, I argue, does a similar job of ‘unhinging’ - it emphasises the pageant as a space for all kinds of imaginaries and fantasies.⁴⁸

Rafael also suggests that photographs can establish a kind of ‘alternative temporality’, in that they are a means of creating something in the “future anterior, the sense of ‘this will have been’” (2000: 102; cf. Lury 1998: 3): a potent vocabulary for imagining aspirant futures. Within this context ethnographic descriptions of themselves, as physical objects, are suggestive of a similar process of aspiration and imagination. For instance, Cannell describes a house in Bicol where a collage of photographs of ‘American-style’ house interiors had been assembled, and picture of the family’s children stuck over them, as if ‘inhabiting’ the American house at some point in the ‘future anterior’ (1999: 22-23). Similarly, Deirdre McKay describes the creation and distribution of photographs - often portraits - by migrants amongst their friends and family back in the Philippines. She reports how the sister-in-law of Jose, a migrant worker in Hong Kong, had constructed a collage in

her house depicting him and others on a background of images (a glossy poster of a waterfall and pictures of Hong Kong office towers) described by McKay as a “landscape ... of the imagined global” (2008: 389). McKay argues that such objects, constituting a ‘migrant archive’ (Appadurai 2003), stimulate and permit new fields of imagination: “by adding bits of the photographs sent by Jose to her collage, [Jose’s sister-in-law] demonstrated her position in a network of relations that enable her, too, to aspire to success through migration” (*ibid*; cf. McKay 2012: 128). Such usages of photographs to navigate fantasies and imaginaries shows their potential for transforming the self, and I argue that it is this register of ‘unhinging’ effects that the pageant performers were also engaging with.

One kind of fantasy that fits these processes of transformation and imagination was to become a ‘home-grown’ business talent, whose interaction and familiarity with foreignness would develop on trade missions or junkets abroad, rather than as a transient wage labourer.⁴⁹ Such a narrative demonstrates that ‘foreignness’ does not solely derive from loci of power beyond the Philippines. Indeed, the class politics surrounding them runs in parallel with pageants in Bicol: just as Bicolano *bakla* were ultimately imitating ‘America’ indirectly through the cultural productions of the Manila elite, such as popular Filipino romance movies (Cannell 1999: 205-6), so the model of businessperson produced by the pageant in Palaw was cosmopolitan, sophisticated and multilingual, but still Filipino.⁵⁰ This was why Dancel, the winner of Ms STEP, did not dream of actually becoming a foreigner, rather of eliciting a kind of personal transformation in a related but distinct register. In other words, it was not necessary for students to ‘mimic’ a Western businesswomen in order to adopt access her attributes. Instead, as the body of work on related practices of ‘imitation’ I have reviewed here suggest, these performances offer the opportunity for moments of creative invention and expression. To this end, if a student did not know what career they wanted to embark upon, either *malaking kumpanya* would be mentioned (as it would be by getting on the ladder of advancement within the Philippines that one could attain middle-class status), or a future as a self-made entrepreneur atop a business empire would be suggested (following the lead of property and mall magnate

Henry Sy, CEO of the massive SM brand, who I was often informed began his working life selling remaindered shoes).

So rather than just desiring encounters with sources of power beyond the borders of the Philippines, narratives of success attempted to emulate the alterity of a *Manileño* elite, perhaps even preferring the symbolism of that class over that represented by the ‘foreign’. Such a kind of hierarchy of expectation was explained to me when asking students to compare work inside and outside the Philippines. The idealisation of domestic careers as the path to middle-class affluence, but acceptance of the likelihood that international labour migration is a more secure route, not only reveals a reasonably rational economic response to high un- and underemployment in the Philippines, but also the attractiveness of emulating a cosmopolitan Filipino middle class, as opposed to a foreign one.

Taglish, Humour and Translation as Subversion

Despite such attempts at emulation, the attitudes of students lacked a sycophantic devotion to the symbols of the metropolitan elite, or an abstracted ‘America’. As in the beauty pageants, competitors enjoyed the comedy of irony and subversion alongside the crueller comedy of potential slippage. At Mr and Ms STEP 2012, the pomposity of the professional middle classes was partially punctured by competitors playing with the inherent absurdity of children in business suits through the flirty and stylised posturing of the *pog-ito* competitors. This brand of humour, at once acerbic and broad, was immensely popular in Palaw. This joke, told to me by Mr Reynald as an example of what he saw as Filipinos’ tendency to act too big for their boots, nicely captures the sentiment: “*Nasa restawran si Juan, at sabi niya: ‘Isang kape nga’, at sabi ng weyter: ‘Sir, decaf po ba?’ Tapos, sabi ni Juan: ‘Tanga ka ba o sadyang bobo lang?! Sympre de cup! Bakit may kape na bang naka-pinggan?!’*” (Juan is at a restaurant, and he says: ‘A coffee please’, and the waiter says: ‘Sir, would you like decaf?’ Then Juan says: ‘Are you a fool or are you deliberately being stupid?! Of course the cup! Why would you have coffee without using a cup?!’).

The humour comes from the failure of Taglish (a code-switching mixture of English and Tagalog) and lack of ‘culture’ exhibited by Juan, but also the inherent confusion of Eng-

lish consonant sounds, where the English phrase ‘decaf’ is rendered indistinguishable from ‘the cup’ in Filipino pronunciations of ‘f’ as ‘p’. In many ways the joke reflects the view that Taglish speech was a highly desirable ability “to cultivate a relationship of proximity to the outside sources of power [here, English speakers] without, however, being totally absorbed by them” (Rafael 1995: 105). Mastering the linguistic registers of the professional class they were performing was the most difficult challenge for the competitors in Mr & Ms STEP, during which students undoubtedly exposed themselves to embarrassment in front of their classmates through the failure to sufficiently ‘wrap’ themselves “in symbols of protective status” (Cannell 1999: 223).

Though certainly more acute in the context of the pageant, anxiety over the successful performance of English and, more specifically, Taglish was not limited to this arena. My conversations with Tagalog speakers (I would speak in English when in private conversations or interviews with some teachers, whose English was better than my Tagalog) undoubtedly placed some pressure on people to use the English they had, but usually after knowing me for a while and having had a few conversations in Tagalog they began to settle into a more colloquial usage of English within their Tagalog speech. The local dialect of Batangueño was described to me as a *malalim* (deep) form of Tagalog than that which provides the basis for the national language of Filipino, with a number of words for which Filipino had Spanish or English variants substituted for ‘old’ Tagalog ones (usually referring to abstract concepts or the natural world).

In practice, most people’s Tagalog use was very similar to that which I had picked up in Manila, with the exception of some local inflections and accents. Use of English and Taglish also followed the patterns of *Manileño* Tagalog, in that employment of English words and phrases, not only provided space to invite associations with “outside sources of power” as described by Rafael (1995: 105), but was also used to casually assert one’s cultural capital. English was the language of education, government and politics and many forms of popular media, and so its appearance in one’s conversation denoted familiarity with these public spheres through expressions of class identity such as having schooling,

reading English-language news or participating in local political meetings or election campaigns.

However, this kind of analysis actually overlooks the ways in which the deployment of English and Taglish could be subversive and anti-hierarchical. Discussing how Nonoy Marcelo played with Taglish language in his Marcos-era *'Ikabod'* cartoons (1995: 113-117), Vicente Rafael argues convincingly for the subversive, egalitarian and ultimately revolutionary capabilities of Taglish in this particular historical moment. More recently, and more pertinently to the present discussion, he has suggested that these effects are not simply functions of Taglish as a language. Rather, Taglish reflects a capacity for linguistic manipulation identifiable at other points in Filipino history, most notably the classrooms of the American colonial period.

In *'The War of Translation'* (2015), Rafael describes the lamentations of nationalists over the 'colonial mentality' of the Philippine education system immediately post-independence, especially their concern over the use of English in the classroom. They contended that if education was occurring in the language of the coloniser, how could the nation of disparate linguistic groups ever attain a coherent post-colonial national identity⁵¹ (2015: 3-6)? Rafael's counterpoint is an intriguing account of the ways in which Filipino teachers and students mistranslated, mispronounced, and misunderstood English, much to the frustration of the American observers. The outcome was troubling for American expectations of a functional outcome to their English tuition, namely productive, democratic, plain-speaking citizens:

"Expecting Filipinos to speak in their, that is, the Americans' language, the latter instead got back something else: not English as they recognised it but the sense of translation at work. It was not, therefore, the Filipino subjects that emerged, masters of a foreign tongue with which to make plain their thoughts to the Americans. Instead the latter were confronted with the relentless movements of the speakers, moving back and forth between their own and the other's tongue."

(Rafael 2015: 12)

Having established the failure of direct English language hegemony, Rafael examines the effects that its tuition did have in the later American colonial era. He proposes, utilising Nick Joaquin's work (1963), that it is the very mistranslations found in the classrooms, morphing and spreading into 'street slang', that constituted the 'national language' of the early independence period (1963: 14). This vernacular borrowed from and synthesised a plethora of native languages, Spanish and English, and was improvisational, informal and above all playful.

In contemporary Batangas, I frequently witnessed the playful potential of English and Taglish. In the classroom, the most common example of such play revolved around puns on English words and phrases that had Tagalog or Taglish homophones, especially offensive or cheeky ones. For example, the English word 'cadet' was turned into '*ka-deyt*' (you date), or when the teacher was not listening, 'put a...' became '*puta*' (prostitute or bitch, '*puta*' itself being a lone word from Spanish). Other studies of the playful use of multilingual word play and punning actually suggest that it offers a forum for otherwise prohibited sexual suggestion (Bresnahan 1992: 45); certainly, for students and teachers alike, so-called '*green-minded*' (dirty jokes or innuendo) jokes were more common when using English and Taglish. Students enjoyed this kind of punning, which also occurred with Tagalog too, and I was often surprised by the obscure vocabulary students would use to make jokes based on Tagalog homophones, often without precisely grasping the English meaning.

Given, then, the capacity of Taglish to simultaneously display status through educational capital and subvert it through mockery and play, my presence in a group with mixed English abilities would often give a pretext for those skilled enough in language to play and joke with translation and show off their ability, often at the expense of others. I was aware that teachers especially would make translation jokes with me to put me at my ease, though most people's enjoyment of and propensity for language jokes meant that I was confident that this represented a common means of teasing and humouring friends. The anxiety in these situations would come from an error of translation or pronunciation, leading to embarrassment for the failed interlocutor (often myself), and much amusement for

everyone else. The feeling of shame at failing to speak English correctly was the most common example of what was called '*nosebleed*' - a condition brought on by thinking too hard. This would be yelled out, by the speaker themselves or those present, whenever translation failed. When I asked Mr Joseph - a fluent English speaker - about this rather lurid expression, he explained that it referred to the feeling of lost fluency and a blocking of words inside the face, analogous to one's sinuses filling with fluid. So, as he tried to speak in English (or I in Tagalog) but couldn't think of the words to say, we had a '*nose-bleed*'.

While the teasing of a *nosebleed* was usually good-natured and jocular when it occurred in everyday conversation, conditions like the pageant required better speaking abilities, beyond, mere proficiency in English. Public speaking comprised a perhaps surprisingly large part of the lives of people in Palaw and Santa Clara, as between the hours spent in church each week, the innumerable speeches prefixing any public event, and, for my student informants, the lectures of their teachers, the time spent listening to someone addressing an audience added up. Thanks to this enforced expertise, most people had an opinion to offer on what made an engaging public speaker. I learned through commentary on these various occasions that speaking English accurately but dully would only get public speakers so far in people's estimations, and that fluency or being *mahusay na pagsasalita* (well-spoken) was more highly prized. So, a candidate for councillor was considered too *hindi natural* (stilted) in his delivery of Taglish phrases, whereas a Pentecostal preacher's insertion of biblical passages in English into his sermons was to be commended, because he would lower his voice pronounce them in a way that was pleasingly *ma-drama* (dramatic) or *madula* (theatrical). The ability to critique without understanding beyond an appreciation of speech style meant that more than once I would hear someone who I knew could not speak English passing comment on a speech made almost entirely in English.

As well as attending many public speeches, students at Palaw NHS and the vocational college in Santa Clara were required to speak to audiences a great deal, whether as part of class exercises, in their roles within the student government or other official bodies, or as

part of competition in the field of public speaking. The following account is of a student involved in the latter. In a communication arts class at the vocational college, Ma'am Fernanda presented the class, which usually focussed on English learning and business communication, with an unusual project for the lesson. One of the students, Kenneth, a 21-year-old gay office management student, was to be entered into the Batangas province inter-college public speaking competition. As part of the competition, he would be presented with a series of open-ended questions, in English, that he would have to answer fully in English. The class wrote questions on cards and shuffled them together, while Kenneth waited in front of the whiteboard at the head of the class. Before answering each question, read out by Ma'am Fernanda, he posed his body precisely, his eyes raised to the ceiling and his hands behind his back. His answers were very deliberately enunciated, and he was making a concerted effort to project his voice. Some of the class had a similar level of language skill to Kenneth, but he was one of the best pupils, and so I doubt that everyone understood his answers. Yet the appreciative coos of 'wow!' and '*maarte!*' (lit. artistic, but more accurately glamorous or well-performed) were universal. Kenneth's answers were more complex than those of the pageant competitors at Palaw NHS, but instead relied on slightly empty platitudes. A representative exchange went as follows: Ma'am Fernanda asked, "What is needed to make a positive difference?", to which Kenneth replied, after some thought, "What is needed to make a positive difference? ... [pause] ... what is needed to make a positive difference is that we can make a change to our environment and the world around us, for the benefit of our youth and our nation. Miracles can happen if we only learn to realise our dreams."

Despite the slight errors in grammar and the class's failure to understand all of his speech, his performance was deemed quite successful. The students' response to his answers was elicited by a successful performance of English language, in which he navigated the 'act' of English speaking in public as defined by its performative elements - the crowd response, fluency, clarity, expression, artfulness. For Rafael, misunderstandings in the classroom were not meaningless - rather they indicated an acceptance by Filipino students of the desire to communicate, but one that "formed around the conjunction rather than the separation of English from the vernacular" (Rafael 2015: 12). In the 'war' of translation,

the play with English suspended the authority that was supposed to flow unproblematically from its adoption.

It is because of the salience of English as the signifier of educational cultural capital *par excellence* in the Philippines, here subverted or at least reconfigured, that I am interested in questioning how education in the Philippines itself is rendered in the light of Rafael's historical analysis. This returns the present discussion to the question of why Ma'am Lina chose the pageant to select candidates for the school's entries to STEP 2012, and a consideration of how education itself was performed through school pageants and talent contests in Palaw and Santa Clara.

Conclusion

One explanation for the devotion of schools, teachers and students to the performance of educational symbols instead of the prescribed approaches - focussed on skills, productivity, and competitiveness - of the national curriculum, could suggest an economic prerogative at work. In the face of the lack of resources, incompetent governance and paltry learning materials the teachers' efforts and those of their students towards manifesting other kinds of cultural capital associated with 'education' would be sensible, ensuring that students would leave school with an ability to convey their schooling to the wider world and get work through that presentation. Further, as Mr Leonard suggested, the public impression of whether you are a good school is driven by the success of pageantry.

However, in this chapter I have aimed to complicate that picture. Sarah Billings' (2011) accounts of the significance of English language usage in pageants and the performative rhetoric of 'education' beyond the walls of the school suggest that there are comparisons to be made between the increasingly widespread phenomenon of beauty pageants (Cohen, Wilk and Stoeltje 1996; Rogers 1998; Schackt 2005; Long 2007; Besnier 2008; Ragbir 2012) and ideologies of education. As I hope to have shown in this chapter, and as much of this literature does as well, to dismiss the emergence of pageants within generic critiques of the commodification of beauty, globalisation or cultural homogenisation risks neglecting the specific renderings, variations and significances given to pageants, and

avoids more difficult questions about their importance in understanding instances of the penetration of global capital, representations of culture, and theories of gender, language and performance.

In this chapter a renewed appreciation of the specific cultural forms of pageantry offers, to begin with, a more nuanced critique of educational practice at Palaw NHS. The fact that teachers and the institutions of schooling are often seen to fail or to have to improvise an educational agenda means that it is no longer satisfactory to characterise schools' (re)production of relations of production simply as results of an ideological state expanding the reach of its neoliberal or colonial governmentality, much as Rafael shows it is unsatisfactory to frame English language tuition in the American period merely as a tool of colonial governance. Such observations recall criticism of Wacquant's characterisation of neoliberalism as an all-conquering 'Leviathan' (2012: 67), focusing on the 'inflation' of the concept beyond its actual efficacy (Collier 2012), and the need to acknowledge that in many contemporary states supposed institutions of neoliberalism often lack efficacy (Goldstein 2012).

Accommodating such criticisms demands an explanation of how existent class relations are not merely the effect of 'miseducation' (Constantino 1970), nor are students, in simplistic terms, "systematically being prepared to participate in the global arena as highly trained, English-speaking, cheap and docile labour force catering to the demands of the international market in line with the neoliberal project" (del Rosario-Malonzo 2007: 94). Analysing the STEP pageant in terms of a wider fostering of neoliberal subjectivity, in which the students' education, and the students themselves, are reduced to their value to the state as 'competitive' labour, can 'inflate' the actually existing efficacy of the state and overlooks the ways in which the performance of 'educational' spectacle - in and of itself - presents students and teachers with opportunities for establishing the power of 'education' in historically specific and transformational terms.

In light of this, I want to suggest a conclusion regarding Ma'am Lina's decision to organise Mr & Ms STEP. Rather than viewing the pageant as an anomalous or even superfluous

educational tool, it is best to consider whether it reflected wider understandings of how pedagogy was implemented in the school. I have noted in the previous chapters how an ‘imitative pedagogy’ informs particular interactions between students and teachers: in this chapter the particulars of this process have been fleshed out, to show how performances that include imitation and emulation can be considered to have transformative effects upon imaginations of personhood, and thus to educational attainment and learning.

I have tried to suggest in this chapter how anthropological analyses of the particular power of ‘imitative’ performance in different contexts in the Philippines might be relevant to schooling. This conclusion has implications for wider understandings of the role of power and ideology in the school. In the previous chapter I began to explore how ‘modernisation’ as a dominant narrative of Philippine history was actually highly contested and hybridised into new kinds of practice in Palaw and Santa Clara, and hinted at culturally specific means by which people negotiated authority. Here I have tried to show what these means are in a particular case. Students and teachers, through reference to a highly familiar - even ‘vernacular’ - performative mode (the pageant), engaged with ‘modernising’ ideology, such as professionalisation of the workforce, instrumentality of skills and ‘competitiveness’, in a way that allowed playful subversion and a disarming of its hegemonic effects.

Following Rafael, in my analysis Taglish and English speech acts are one mechanism by which this kind of hybridisation occurs, not just in pageants, but also in other instances of social performance, including the classroom and in joking behaviours. However, the limits of Taglish as a rebellious form are apparent throughout Rafael’s work, even in his critique of Constantino’s conception of English language as a monolith of cultural colonialism. In chapters 6 and 7 the knowledge of English as a counter-hegemonic tool is questioned and complicated, as I describe students’ experiences in call centres and the tourism industry. Such encounters with global capital reveal how knowledge of English brings with it both emancipatory opportunity and coercion into relations with new and dangerous powers.

The chapters so far have indicated ways in which the responses of students, teachers and the wider cultural expectations of education's effects complicated the project of schooling in Batangas. This analysis has, necessarily, focussed on those already within and invested in the schooling system. The next chapter will broaden my analysis, investigating the experiences of those outside or peripheral to the schooling system, and also how 'education' operated within wider ideologies of responsibility and morality.

Chapter 4

'Palaw Foundation Worldwide' in the Remittance Economy: Money, kinship and the morality of childhood and youth

Introduction

It was only after I had arrived in Palaw and moved into Jesusa's spare room that I found out how relevant her current activities in the town were to my research questions. Though I had known she was a former migrant worker with a husband in Japan, I only subsequently heard about her role as secretary and founding member of the Palaw Foundation Worldwide (PFW). The foundation was set up in early 2012 by a group of former international migrants who grew up in the area, with the purpose of providing guidance to and financially supporting the schooling of poorer students who would otherwise struggle to pay for their education at the local public schools. The organisation, which drew both its membership and donations from residents in Palaw and from permanent and temporary migrants in Saudi Arabia, Canada, the US, Italy, Greece, and other countries, acted as a conduit through which locals and their families now working abroad could donate money for payment of tuition fees, transport costs and school equipment of poorer students.

PFW members in Palaw tended to be former migrant workers themselves, though other wealthy non-migrants were involved as organisers and patrons. Socially, the PFW membership overlapped with a number of other charitable organisations in Palaw that comprised a local elite of wealthy and politically active persons. This group was comprised of both those associated with 'old' money and land ownership such as the Bermudez family mentioned in chapter 2, and those whose wealth came through remittances and related economies. Of the many societies and clubs, organisations associated with Churches were particularly active: the Catholic fraternity Knights of Columbus had an active chapter in Palaw, and Protestant Churches, especially the Iglesia ni Cristo, regularly organised their congregations in fundraising activities or work days. The local school board, where teachers, parents, and local-level DepEd representatives sat in administration over the public elementary and high schools, also shared a number of members with these other

groups, as did the ‘Tulume Club’: a local manifestation of the Rotary Club. The membership of the foundation thus reflected a diversity of economic, social and political orientations towards overseas migration.

Over the course of my fieldwork, I attended and occasionally helped organise several PFW events, which were either fundraising parties or were thrown explicitly as recreational activities for the young people who were beneficiaries of the PFW, called ‘Palaw Foundation Scholars’. During my fieldwork there were between twenty and fifty ‘scholars’ (aged between 11 and 22) supported in one way or another by the Foundation, but this number expanded after I left the Philippines. Scholars mostly came from the Palaw National High School (NHS) intake, though two others studied in Santa Clara at the tertiary level, some attended other local public schools, and three were out-of-school-youth (OSY) studying in the regional Alternative Learning System (ALS). Towards the end of my fieldwork I was included in the organisation of an event for the scholars: an excursion to the beach to celebrate the end of term, and the graduation from high school of some of the students.

On this occasion, about thirty student beneficiaries and a number of volunteers were crammed into a hired *jeepney* and cars belonging to Jesusa and Mr Joseph, who worked with foundation students from Palaw NHS, and we set off for one of the many ‘resorts’ that dot the Batangas coastline. After an evening of eating and playing ‘*patintero*’ (a tag-like game) on the beach, Mr Joseph, myself and two older student scholars from Santa Clara were talking around the barbecue, and the conversation had turned to discussion about why the Philippines has remained poor despite its natural wealth⁵² and hard-working people. Answers to this often rhetorical question would invariably look to the corruption of state officials who bleed the economy into their own pockets, or to the fecklessness of the ordinary Filipinos who lack the wherewithal to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Tonight, it was the latter. When I suggested that the poor shouldn’t be blamed for being poor, as they had to overcome great obstacles to even survive, Mr Joseph broke into English (so I knew he was about to impart great wisdom) and, in a smiling yet deliberate tone, said: “It is not a sin to be born with nothing, but it is a sin to die with nothing.”

I was taken aback by how uncompromising this position was, particularly as I had come to know Mr Joseph as magnanimous and kind. He was well known in Palaw and at the school for his good works - his affiliation with PFW among them - and support of students suffering hardship. He had a great deal of experience with children and young people who faced structural forces obviously beyond their influence, and he had also frequently gone beyond his duty as a teacher to help them confront these difficulties. Nevertheless, he had also often lamented to me about how difficult it would be for a young person from Palaw, born to a farmer's household, to overcome many of these difficulties.

I became preoccupied with his position as our conversation that evening continued onto other topics: why did he consider a person dying in poverty to have committed a sin? His explanation for this view was that dying 'with nothing' indicated idleness in work and specifically (here he indirectly addressed the students talking with us) idleness in educational endeavours. He explained: "in the Philippines everyone can go to school, so even if you have nothing, you can change your life with education". Mr Joseph's view on the efficacy of education, its effect on your material existence, and even the individual responsibility one holds for accomplishing this, was echoed during my fieldwork by many of the members and supporters of PFW, but represented only one facet of the moral-economic world that the organisation envisaged its actions taking place in.

In the context of the PFW event, and with the two students and myself sat listening to him, Mr Joseph had taken the opportunity to articulate a number of expectations that the organisation espoused, and in doing so pointed towards a wider web of ideologies surrounding youth, remittances and morality in the Philippines. As I discuss below, this involved a complex of positions regarding national projects of schooling, the families of labour migrants, obligations of the young, and the futurity of youth. It especially indexed particular understandings of the value of children in relation to the reproduction of 'the family', and the role of money in realising and facilitating and reinforcing these values.

This chapter and the next are united by a concern with the responses of children and young people to the moral significances of these positions, and I show how children and

young people approach their moral engagements with kin and affective relations, and with the schooling system and the nation-state. Within these frameworks, children and young people acquire - and in some cases are able to manipulate - certain kinds of value and power, but the greater emphasis is on their experiences of obligation and responsibility. The moral burdens they feel imposed on them by each of these institutions are bound up in complex class and nationalistic politics, which I explore through a critique of various practices and ideologies that constitute them.

In this chapter, I begin my analysis with a description of the PFW and one other group: the Batangas Church Commission for Migrants (BCCM), an organisation within the regional Catholic Church, set up to help families of migrant workers in Lipa, a large city about 3 hours east by bus from Palaw. I focus specifically on these two quite different organisations⁵³ as they both exerted their efforts on two primary concerns. The first was the flows and significations of money from overseas and from other sources, over which they attempted to gain control in an effort to mediate what they perceived as the negative effects of remittances, and divert money towards positive actions. My analysis of the PFW and the BCCM uses anthropological approaches to money, particularly Parry & Bloch's theory of 'contamination' (1989: 23), to demonstrate how the economy of remittances intersected with moral anxieties surrounding the failures of kinship.

Second, both organisations focussed their attentions on schooling and education, and particularly their socially transformative, or redemptive, effects. The institutions of state schooling were, however, somewhat mistrusted by the PFW in particular, and so conceptions of the power of education depended greatly on corroborating conceptions of the potentiality of youth. This emphasis is present in scholarship on the concept of 'futuraity' (Jenks 1996: 102), which posits the role of 'youth' as the most viable targets for eliciting wider social change to be a feature of capitalist ideology more generally. I will also argue here, and continue to in the next chapter, that the particular significance of this in the Philippines lies in two culturally specific moral saliences of youth and childhood: of '*kabataan*' (youth) as both a problematic and vulnerable social demographic and an

aspirational and transformative ideological category; and the position of children in relation to their parents as a vital index of the strength of Filipino kinship.

The Palaw Foundation Worldwide

The PFW was not a particularly slick operation, but its membership was enthusiastic and active. While Jesusa did her best to administer the often-large amounts of money that flowed through the organisation, the practicalities of fundraising were not very centralised and frequently informal. Members would usually solicit funds independently from within their networks of relatives and friends, then pass on (often unexpected) sums to Jesusa to be budgeted. Money was raised through two main conduits - first, through activities and events in Palaw that encouraged charitable donations from individuals and families. Jesusa organised and won the PFW affiliation with a variety of different kinds of events, which included both 'traditional' public celebrations, such as *barangay pyesta* and the Tulume Club ball (described below), and more 'modern' kinds of occasion. These included events such as somewhat informal Halloween and Christmas parties, usually thrown for the benefit of the scholars, which were occasionally referred to specifically as 'Western-' or 'American-style' parties. The themes, decorations and, to a lesser extent, the food at these events would be familiar to a Euro-American observer. I also attended a 'batch' reunion for Jesusa's old classmates at the Catholic high school in Palaw through which Jesusa also raised some money.

More established public events were co-opted to bring other prominent figures in Palaw public life, such as politicians, senior Church figures, rotary club members, and so on into interaction with the PFW, and solicit their support. The political significances of this kind of event cannot be overlooked, as a number of scholars have discussed the ways in which public fundraising activities in the Philippines can be read as an index of the political status as a patron or facilitator of patronage; for example, Fenella Cannell describes the political machinations and careful alliances behind the sponsorship of big-money beauty pageants and their competitors in Naga City (1999: 219-221). Indeed, the presence of politicians in the public sphere at events such as fundraisers has been an important means by which the patronage, clientelism and 'machine politics' have been foregrounded in

Philippine political science (e.g. Sidel 1999; Hedman & Sidel 2000; Quimpo 2005; Teehankee 2006).

The significance here is in highlighting where the PFW was attempting to fit into the competing narratives of authority described in chapter 2. It represented another example of hybridity in that while it negotiated the new economy of remittances, it simultaneously established relations of patronage between members and scholars (as I show in the next chapter), was reliant on what might be termed ‘client’ political relations with local politicians, and employed forms of authority that indexed ‘traditional’ or even *ilustrado* idioms of authenticity. The following account of a fundraising event elaborates this political element of the PFW’s fundraising.

On Rizal Day 2013 (30th December, named in honour of the Filipino revolutionary Dr Jose Rizal), a ball was held in Palaw by the Tulume Club, a social and philanthropic club founded in 1957, and composed only of couples from the local area that were business-people, army officers, doctors, politicians, and the like.⁵⁴ The purpose was ostensibly a party thrown by the club members for themselves, but the opportunity was taken to invite the incumbent congressman for the local seat to speak and endorse the club, and also to raise money for a number of charitable enterprises. Because Jesusa was a Tulume member, the PFW was one of the more prominent beneficiaries of the donations being made, and many of the speakers at the event made reference to the organisation, its members, and their scholars.

The event was held in the basketball court at the centre of town, with lavishly decorated tables spread across the concrete, and a large dance floor opened up in the middle. Male guests wore suits and jackets, and the women wore expensive and elegant party dresses, but the members themselves wore ‘*tradisyonal*’ attire. For men, this was a thin white ‘*barong*’ shirt, and for the women either a lavish ‘*terno*’ dress (a Spanish style with enormous ‘butterfly’ sleeves made popular by Imelda Marcos) or a ‘*Maria Clara*’, named after the Spanish ‘*mestiza*’ heroine of Jose Rizal’s nationalist epic ‘*Noli me Tangere*’. This involves a long black skirt, a white lace blouse and large white shawl worn across the

shoulders. The mayor's secretary, named Bertie, who was not himself a Tulume member, explained to me that:

B: "*date, ang Tulume Club para sa elite lang: 'middle people' ay mahiya, kasi wala silang magandang damit, hindi nila kayang bilhin. Pero ngayon, mayroon lahat dito: rich, middle, poor!*" (Before the Tulume Club was just for the elite: the middle people were embarrassed, because they didn't have beautiful clothes, they couldn't afford it. But now, everyone is here: rich, middle, poor!)

The evening's entertainment involved a series of dances by the membership, beginning with a Spanish court dance called the '*rigodon de honor*'; a circular procession that presented the couples to the assembled audience. This was followed by two '*tradisyonal*' dances that, it was first explained to me, came from 'tribal' Filipinos, though I later learned they had been choreographed by one of the dance instructors at the town gym during his aerobics classes for some of the dancers. These unnamed dances were very sedate (some of the members were over 70), and involved synchronised exchanges of partners and coordinated movements in front of one another, with only intermittent contact between one another.

The significance of 'traditional' dance in making representations of 'culture' in the Philippines has been demonstrated by Sally Ann Ness for Cebu City (Ness 1985; 1992; 1995), where a dance called the '*sinulog*' was performed and commodified during municipal pageants. Associated with an indigenous Visayan healing ritual, the *sinulog* had become refracted into multiple iterations, both secular and sacred, that contributed to a fragmented and contested understanding of what the contemporary 'local culture' (1992: 25) actually was. In this environment, the *sinulog* performance's "cultural flexibility" allowed for fluid interactions and multiple interpretations of its symbols between distinct and divided social groups (*ibid*: 174). In the mid-1980s, a discourse of what constituted an 'authentic' *sinulog* came to be reassembled around new troupes of performers, but only in the context of patronage by elites who organised the parades (*ibid*: 225).

In Palaw, the Tulume Club performance of ‘traditional’ dances reflected a similar elite-led impetus to present a social body in conversation with itself over mutually legible ‘cultural’ symbols, though the particular ‘indigenous’ identity considered to exist in Batangas was better demonstrated by another dance performance I witnessed. Talented dancers picked from students at the private Catholic school and the Palaw NHS were gathered to compete in a national dance competition in which every municipality in the Philippines could participate. Looking at competitors from the rest of the islands, the common theme was basing an extravagant performance with hundreds of dancers on local ‘indigenous’ dance styles, costumes and other iterations of local material culture. For the organisers in Palaw, the lack of a local ‘tribal’ style led them to pick a *taga-bukid* style instead. Dancers were equipped with the wide conical ‘*salakot*’ hat, rolled up trousers, and baggy white shirts so as to look like farm labourers, and dances revolved around the performance of particular kinds of harvesting and animal rearing. Crowning the performance were a number of enormous painted cardboard and bamboo placards depicting produce of the local area.

The ‘indigenisation’ of agricultural labour in the Palaw dances serves to accentuate how other ‘indigenous’ dances in the Philippines have been transformed into elite cultural products. Despite Bertie’s assertion to the contrary, my knowledge of the attending families and the members that I recognised suggested that the Tulume club was still predominantly a social club for the local ‘elite’, and the dances were meant to be consumed in a manner which reinforced their cultural authority. Reinforcing this perception were the crowds of people outside the fencing that circled the basketball court, who treated the event as a spectacle to be enjoyed. Small children had even climbed up onto the roof of the neighbouring gym to get a better look, and at least 1,000 in all had gathered to peer in at the performance. The explanations from some of my friends from the school (mostly women) in the crowd as to the spectacle’s popularity suggested mostly that enjoying the ‘*magandang*’ (beautiful) dresses and the women in particular being ‘*maarte*’ (artistic or glamorous).

Jesusa's explanation for the PFW's involvement with the Tulum club is that this was how they gained greater visibility in the community: that "more people know about us" was an important motivation. However, her secondary motivation was the view that unless local leaders coordinate help for the poorest, or are spurred into doing so, then no action ever takes place.⁵⁵ She considered that embedding the PFW in the consciousness of powerful actors in local politics was the most effective means of reinforcing the Foundation's financial security, as they would be facilitated in demonstrating their benevolent patronage to poorer local students. But Jesusa was also advocating for the PFW by shoring up her own social capital in the Tulum Club. As opposed to the more established, landowning families, Jesusa's wealth came from work overseas and remittances from her husband, and let her position herself as an outsider, advocating the scholars to the mayor and other attending grantees at the Tulum Ball. But she herself was establishing relations of political affiliation with prominent individuals, and later boasted to me that the mayor was one of their biggest contributors.

In addition to soliciting 'local' donations, PFW members received donations from overseas workers from Palaw through their family members who remained in the Philippines, and also reached out to their own families living and working abroad. Philanthropic donations from the Filipino diaspora are a significant source of funds for charitable and development organisations in the Philippines, and as such the PFW represents a small-scale example of a much bigger trend. For instance, the government-run Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) runs a program called '*Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino*' (*Linkapil*, 'Link for Philippine Development'), which had in 2010 raised 2.49 billion PHP (approx. 100 million GBP) in its twenty year history, solely from donations by Filipinos in diaspora. Similarly, an emergent literature notes the significant role of diaspora philanthropy in responses to natural disasters in the Philippines (e.g. Loebach 2015).

A crucial element of this kind of flow of money depends on the fostering of links back to the hometowns of those living permanently in diaspora. The literature on diaspora philanthropy in the Philippines notes the role of 'hometown associations' that reinforce relations between former neighbours in diaspora, and maintains their links with their home (Opini-

ano 2005: 231; Silva 2006; Orozco & Rouse 2013). While I was not aware of any home-town associations officially affiliated with Palaw, a number of individual members had close links with family members and friends living in Chicago. The ‘*Chicago taga-Palaw*’ (as this group were referred to as) contributed a sizeable proportion of the money and other donations received from overseas.

In general, money sent home from abroad for the foundation came in greater amounts from those who were settled in other countries, as opposed to those with temporary work. Initially I was surprised (given the emphasis the organisation placed on its internationalism) to find that while many members worked in other countries, their contributions were small. Ronald, the foundation’s president, who had worked in Canada for over 25 years, explained this when I asked how often they received money from members overseas:

R: “*Hindi pare-pareho, hindi naman sabay-sabay the money. Mayroon nagpi-pledge ng monthly donation, mayroon nagpi-pledge once every two months. Hindi pare-pare.*” (Not regularly, the money is not in even amounts. There are pledges for monthly donations, pledges for donations once every two months. It is not regular)

CM: “*Pero, magkano iyan?*” (But, how much is that?)

R: “*Mas malaki pa rin nag-gagaling dito ... Dahil, unang-una, ang remittances from abroad ay hindi naman palagi. Sa Middle East, pagsuweldo nila ang once a month, we cannot expect that much from them.*” (More still comes from here ... because, the remittances from abroad are not always there. In the Middle East, they are paid once a month, we cannot expect much from them)

Despite this, the diverse locations of donors were emphasised by the PFW. On posters put up opposite the church in the town centre to memorialise the achievements of a number of scholars, the pictures of students were placed alongside the names of donors from around the world, including the place where the person worked or lived. This included PFW members and donors from the UK, Japan, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, and from other provinces around the Philippines. Public events designed to showcase the work of the Foundation to the community in Palaw also emphasised the internationalism of the

organisation. For instance, at a fundraiser, a group of scholars had been invited to receive awards for consistent grades at school and ‘good character’, and were presented with what were called ‘American school bags’; two dozen rucksacks that had been collected by an overseas member and sent back to Palaw.

There was little official division of labour (save for titles held by the organising committee) amongst the membership of the PFW in Palaw, and so most were involved in both fundraising and the ‘intervention’ side of the Foundation’s work. The PFW selected current students for whom the costs of education were on the cusp of being prohibitive, and sponsored them to attend school and then, potentially, college. While senior members of PFW occasionally also gave students counselling or advice, usually if a student was struggling academically or had misbehaved, and the organisation also organised excursions and events like the day trip described above, support to students was mostly monetary. This financial assistance was necessitated by the fact that while elementary and secondary schools for students up to the age of 16 have long been public and do not charge tuition fees, the costs of attendance are often still unmanageable for many families. The costs of attending public high school in Palaw were often as high as PHP2,000 (~£30) per student, per school year, accumulating to a significant amount for large households. Costs included uniforms, student government membership fees, transport to and from school, ‘voluntary’ contributions for equipment and activities, and the opportunity cost of the students’ lost labour.

While some ‘foundation scholars’ had requested help themselves, many more had been nominated by teachers at the four public high schools in the municipality. Potential scholars were evaluated by PFW members through consultation with their families and an interview with the student themselves. The first assessment I sat in on was actually conducted for two students, who took it in turns to have their interview. On a school day in August two teachers from the high school, Ma’am Serena and Ma’am Ursula, arrived at Jesusa’s house from the school during the lunch break with the two students sat on the backs of their motorbikes. The student I knew was AJ, aged 15 at the time of the interview and in the fourth grade, whereas Missy came from a younger year.

The teachers had come as their respective nominators. I waited with AJ and Ma'am Serena as they painstakingly filled out the application form, in English, which required information about AJ's grades and his attendance records. AJ was nervous before the interview and shy towards Jesusa and the other representatives of PFW who had gathered to sign off on AJ's sponsorship, though the questions were not necessarily taxing, and were given in Tagalog and not English. He was asked mostly about what he found difficult at school, what work his parents had (his father was a mechanic), and how much money he needed to continue his studies. Ma'am Ursula fielded the last question and explained AJ's situation: his family's house was a long way from the school, but on the main *jeepney* route into Palaw from Santa Clara. After some quick maths the PFW officials had calculated the sum he would be given to cover this expense, and everyone was sent on their way, with AJ approximately PHP3,500 better off. AJ received the money in weekly instalments, handed to him personally at school by his class teacher and nominator, Ma'am Serena. Two weeks after the meeting, when I asked him what happened to the money, he said that he gave it to his mother, who then gave him the money necessary for the *jeepney* rides every day.

Who could become scholars thus depended on a number of factors, and relied upon the alignment of some contradictory elements, as well as the discretion of the teachers in the schools. The process of selection was not one based solely on need, but also on the deservingness of the students as understood through a number of different criteria. While many high school students came from households that struggled to pay for schooling, scholars also had to have some academic ability or at least good attitude to schoolwork. Teachers at school would assess this, and badly behaved students were unlikely to be nominated. At the same time, students could not be too brilliant already, as this suggested that there was no problem to fix. This is illustrated by the case of a very bright female scholar, who had been receiving money from PFW since its foundation. Jesusa was looking over her forms while the young woman was helping her with some of the foundation's administrative tasks and, grinning with feigned shock (she knew the student and her academic achievements quite well), pointed to the scholar's high grades and said: "*Wow! Masyadong matalino ka! Overqualified ka!*" (Wow! You're too smart! You're overquali-

fied!). There was no risk to her funding, however, as the Foundation committed to funding the students for as long as they stayed enrolled in schools. This kind of teasing over the scholars' successes was commonplace, but never threatened their position in the foundation.

AJ, by contrast, did not consider himself to be a top student (he was in the middle-tier class of the fourth year during my fieldwork), but he did graduate in 2013. His desire was to start a small business (he wasn't sure what it would do yet), and so was hopeful that family members and the PFW would support him studying management at a college in Santa Clara. However, after describing this potential future for himself, he was quick to add that “*’man, mas importante ang mataas na suweldo, kahit na sa abroad, dahil sa sustentuhin ang akin pamilya*” (although, it is more important to get a high salary, even abroad, so I can support my family). I did not meet AJ's family, but knew that he was the second eldest of seven siblings, one of whom also attended Palaw NHS. AJ's explanation of his motivation for attending school and college was typical, in that he emphasised the need to contribute income to the household, especially to help his parents (*makatulong ang mga magulang ko*). The Foundation's sponsorship had already allowed him to begin to do this. On the occasions he was given a free ride to school, either on a relative or friend's motorbike, trike, or *jeepney*, he said that the money was used to pay for other items associated with schooling, such as repairing uniforms, for both himself and his younger siblings at the local elementary school.

According to Ma'am Ursula, another PFW member and volunteer, this kind of distribution of Foundation funds to other students within the families of beneficiaries was commonplace, and sanctioned by the foundation. This was, she said, because for scholars the education of younger siblings (*edukasyon para sa mga bunso ko*) was part of “*ang inyong mga responsibilidad bilang isang kuya*” (your responsibilities as an older brother). It was frequently explained to me that eldest siblings (whether male or female) bore responsibility for many aspects of their younger brothers' and sisters' wellbeing (a phenomenon described in greater depth in chapters 5 and 7), including their school attendance. Children

as young as 7 and 8 were given the duty of making sure their younger siblings were escorted safely to their elementary school and wore their uniform correctly.

The rhetoric of the PFW tended to extend this kind of fraternal responsibility surrounding schooling into a wider-ranging responsibility for one's classmates, and even for students' entire generations. Members entreated scholars through speeches, promotional materials produced by the PFW and personal advice from teachers to become a '*modelong estudyante*' or '*ulirang estudyante*' (model student), and to set a positive example to other students. This meant good behaviour, respect for teachers and the PFW membership, and of course good grades on one's schoolwork. Ideally, too, it meant a successful progression into tertiary education. After one committee meeting at which he took the minutes, one of the college-level scholars, Rex, described to me how scholars were being encouraged to change dominant attitudes surrounding education:

R: "*Sa Foundation, magpapaunlad kami ng sunod na generation of the Philippine youth. May maraming kahirapan para sa mga kabataan ng Pilipinas: edukasyon ay napkahalaga kung makapanaig kami ng mga balakid. Mangailangan kami ang bagong henerasyon. Kapag napakaraming migrante sa abroad, there is no hope for the youth here, sa Pilipinas. Magtatangka kami magturo ang mga estudyante: it is not just about money! We want them to make a positive change for the Philippines.*" (At the Foundation, we shall develop the next generation of the Philippine youth. There are so many difficulties for the Philippine youth: education is the most important thing if we're to overcome these obstacles. We need a new generation. When there are so many migrants abroad, there is no hope for the youth here, in the Philippines. We try to teach the students: it is not just about money! We want them to make a positive change for the Philippines.)

This ambivalence towards labour migration and desire for social change meant that the PFW had to balance awkwardly between an admission that it, and many of its members, had benefitted from working overseas, but that this was an unfavourable outcome for the scholars. This was illustrated during an interview I conducted with Ronald, the PFW's

president, and Isabela, another committee member. Ronald, a retired widower, had lived and worked for 26 years in Vancouver, as an accountant, and now divided his time between Canada and the Philippines. He was a close family friend of Jesusa, and so he often stayed in one of the small properties she had built on her plot when in the country. His three children all lived and worked in Canada; he and they were all contributors to the Foundation. Isabela, also a widow, belonged to a landowning family from Santa Clara, but had lived in Palaw for four decades and had been married to a doctor at the nearby Western Batangas hospital.

When the conversation turned to migrant labour, they spoke cynically of the importance of overseas workers to the government, whose officials they thought benefitted the most from the income generated by remittances to the Philippines. Isabela coolly joked that the portion of remittances going to the pockets of politicians is the reason why OFWs have been called heroes, referring to Cory Aquino's '*bagong bayani*'. Ronald added that, "*Maraming pulitiko yung mayaman, dahil sa yung portion. A big portion of the remittances go to the pocket of the politician. That is why the Philippines is so poor*" (Many politicians are wealthy, because of that portion. A big portion of the remittances go to the pocket of the politician. That is why the Philippines is so poor). I asked him and Isabela if, in the future, they want this to change, so that the young people that PFW work with don't have to leave the country for jobs. He paused, and answered wryly, in English, "That will be our glorious moment."

This rhetoric of community, and national, transformation was also somewhat at odds, however, with my general sense of what most students planned for their own futures. In a survey I conducted of the 2013 graduating 'batch' at Palaw NHS, I found that 73% wanted to work abroad at some point in the future. My interviews with students at the high school and the ISA in Santa Clara also revealed a near consensus over the view that working abroad was the way that one earned the most money. Alongside this, 82% of the high school students believed that their family held the most influence over what job they would take, and a similar proportion of interviewees, like AJ, viewed their primary moti-

vation for getting an education, and subsequently a job, to be the fulfilment of their responsibilities to their family.

Scholars, such as AJ, were aware of this contradiction. Krissie, another 15-year-old scholar from a family who struggled to support several siblings through their educations, recounted that Ma'am Serena had encouraged her to think about becoming a teacher; partly because she thought she would suit the job, but also because it would be '*paggawang mabuti para sa bayan*' (doing good for the nation/the people). Krissie's response was to acknowledge that a responsibility to a national and community collective was admirable, but she worried that the opportunities to have a 'secure' (*maayos*) livelihood were too low in the Philippines: "*wala pang oportunidad sa Pilipinas*" (there's still no opportunity in the Philippines). Students then were implicated in a moral tug-of-war between the financial burden placed on them by normative kinship obligations, and the developmentalist, nationalist project of the PFW. By looking now at the BCCM, I hope to show a parallel moral contestation surrounding the relationship between kinship and migration.

The Batangas Church Commission for Migrants

The BCCM was founded in the mid-1990s alongside sister branches in Pampanga and Manila, but only truly began operations after 2005 when pressure from Church pastoral workers in communities with large populations temporarily overseas convinced the Church of the need for a specialised division to provide support to the families of migrants. The commission aims to provide holistic support to families of an estimated 200,000 migrant workers from Batangas province, with the stated goal of protecting relationships strained by separation due to migration. The BCCM sits within a wider Church policy on migrants in the Philippines, incorporating a number of other missions and projects, including encouraging OFWs as missionaries and supporting legal aid for Filipinos overseas.

I first visited the BCCM in October 2012, after corresponding with Angela, an employee of a branch of the commission called 'Anak Pilipino' that works with the children of mi-

grant workers in the province. I caught two buses and a *jeepney* from Palaw to Lipa, and located the offices in an large American colonial era two-storey house, set back from the road and surrounded by a high walls and a tree-filled garden. My principal points of contact at the Commission were Angela, a lay official responsible for administration, and Dr Elizabeta, a retired doctor who had worked in medical outreach in Western Batangas, and subsequently organised children's health clinics in Lipa. She had been involved in liaising with the now defunct Palaw branch of Anak Pilipino.

Every month, the BCCM office welcomes delegates from about twenty parishes in the Lipa area, who report of migrant issues and ongoing projects in these locales. The vast majority are former migrant workers who have been trained and turned their experience of being part of a transnational family to helping others in their community with relatives abroad. On my first visit, I attended one such gathering. The meeting began with prayers (in Tagalog) for the fulfilment of the needs and aims of the group and for the beneficiaries of their work, followed by various members reporting on activities and telling stories about aspects of their work from the parishes. The group discussed these earnestly, and advice and comments were offered. One story, which I later learned was highly typical, concerned the need for intervention in a family's financial situation. A male seafarer had failed to send home his monthly wage, and a debt owed by his wife had been called in. The BCCM representative had stepped in to mediate the situation, and had resolved the crisis by persuading the creditor to extend the loan until the next pay packet arrived.

The BCCM was also involved in a number of research projects into the experiences of families of migrant labourers, though I wasn't able to access any of their findings. In interviews, Angela and Dr Elizabeta independently told me about the results of the survey, which were predictably mixed on respondents' feelings about migration. Positive responses centred around money, and the access to more expensive private education, new houses and greater levels of disposable income more generally. The negatives were more numerous: chief among them was concern over financial management. Financial counsel provided for the newly wealthy was a foundational purpose of the Commission. In an interview on the subject, Dr Elizabeta confided knowingly that "*ang pamilya ng migrante*

hindi marunong mag-ingat ng pera” (the families of migrants don’t know how to take care of money). This was often related to anxiety that comfortable living standards might foster laziness and extravagance amongst the families of migrants.

Unrealistic expectations of life abroad were problematic too, though the consensus was that was that those who work abroad, and paint a rose-tinted picture of their experiences, perpetuate this problem. One BCCM official, when talking about the often underestimated dangers associated with work abroad, noted that “*ang mga migrante ang sinasabi nila, ‘maganda mag-abroad!’ Iyan nag-aabroad, hindi sila umamin ng totoo*” (The migrants are the ones who are saying that ‘its great to go abroad!’ Those who go abroad do not admit the truth). This was such a concern for the BCCM that one of their most established and widely promoted schemes is ‘Bantangan Pondong’, a life and accident insurance scheme run through the Church that encourages people to plan for risks undertaken during work abroad. Mostly, the cases I was told about were simply insured payments made to secure visas and agency fees, but Dr Elizabeta told me of a number of families working with the BCCM who had claimed when a relative had had an accident at work overseas.⁵⁶

The most pressing effects of migration that the BCCM identified, however, were what might broadly be termed as strains upon kinship. First, threats to the relationship between husband and wife, and the risk of infidelity which working abroad brought, were troubling issues for the BCCM staff. I was assured that this was just as big a problem for men as for women, and that cases occurred regularly both in the Philippines and in the place of migrant work. The tone when discussing infidelity was often sympathetic, however, and most staff stressed that they could understand why people would seek other partners while their spouse is absent, noting that estrangement (*paglalayo*) caused by long-distance relationships and the presence of empathetic friends in similar positions (for both those abroad and at home) could bring this about.

The protection of marital relations was mostly attempted through tasking trained counselors with speaking to families with relatives abroad, though there are also efforts to provide cheap communication technologies. The attempts to provide international communi-

cation should not be overlooked as an insignificant intervention in helping families. I asked Benny, a parish representative from just outside Lipa, who had previously worked in Canada away from her husband and latterly her children, and who now had two children who worked abroad too, what had changed the most since going abroad became commonplace in the 80s, and since she had worked away from her family in Canada. She considered that technological advances in internet communication and cheap mobile phones were the most significant difference, as these have helped to overcome the emotional strains of working abroad for both workers and families. The BCCM's practice in this regard is well backed up by ethnographic accounts of the everyday relations of care between migrants' parents and their children, which often hinge on access to and low costs usage of mobile phone technology (Ellwood-Clayton 2003; Vertovec 2004; Parreñas 2001a, 2005b, 2014; Pertierra 2005; Panagakos & Horst 2006), and increasingly online communication (Madianou & Miller 2011; Galam 2012).

Associated with the anxiety over marital breakdown was the BCCM's concern over the effects of migration on parenting and the livelihood of children of migrants. Routinely deploying the rhetoric of children 'left behind', the BCCM closely replicated the critiques of the Scalabrini Migration Centre and Child Health and Migrant Parents in South-East Asia (CHAMPSEA) (Paz Cruz & Paganoni 1989; Battistella & Conaco 1998; Asis & Ruiz-Marave 2013), as mentioned in the introduction. This 'care crisis' (Parreñas 2003) is the supposed degradation of (gendered) parental care caused especially by mass migrations of Filipino mothers to work overseas. Because normative expectations of Filipino practices of relatedness are not easily amenable to having transnational parents, such households have come to be considered 'broken' (Parreñas 2001b: 109). An alternative (and more acceptable) critique, based on dependency theory, focusses on the displacement of women from the global South to the global North along 'care chains', in which the women employing nannies in wealthy countries 'drains' their sending communities, resulting in a dearth of familial care for the very poorest: "an older daughter from a poor family who cares for her siblings while her mother works as a nanny caring for the children of a migrating nanny who, in turn, cares for the child of a family in a rich country" (Hochschild 2000: 131).

Deirdre McKay offers an important counter to ‘care chains’ analysis, pointing out a number of problems with it (2007: 177-178). Such models tend to ‘monetise’ care, reducing it a uniform resource to be moved around frictionlessly across vastly different contexts, a process that also irons out differences between the intimate spheres of the households of the women at each stage of the ‘chain’. The distinction between intimate and economic life is also often too starkly drawn, and the ‘incursion’ of economic activity into personal life assumed to be necessarily violent. The result is that the reflexive, creative and diverse responses to migration and pressures on the work of care that McKay identifies in her own work (Gibson, Law & McKay 2001; McKay 2006, 2008, 2010) are concealed. Rha-
cel Parreñas similarly notes that the divisions and violence of separation can be overstated, emphasising instead the ways in which children and parents are often able to construct viable affective relations over long distances, especially through new communication technologies (2001a, 2005b, 2014). While I fully accept these critiques, and find that my own data on the households of migrants supports their conclusions, it is important to note here that the BCCM still maintained a far less optimistic view about the potential effects of parental migration on childcare.

The accounts of the threats that labour migration by parents posed to their children were often augmented or garnished, hinting at the possibility that the BCCM’s rhetoric of concern regarding the families of migrant workers, rather than representing the problems genuinely faced by these families reflected an overstated moral panic around the institutions of social reproduction.⁵⁷ Descriptions of the effects of migrant parents on older children were just as dire, and also often overstated. Among the risks that the BCCM staff claimed that ‘*talubata*’ (teenagers) ran were drunkenness, other kinds of drug use, poor school performance and finally unemployment. Such testimonies are not unusual in the Philippines, reproducing a well-documented public and academic discourse that claims that migration, especially female migration, threatens the welfare of children and leads to problems that are generalised as ‘delinquency’ (Asis 1992: 83; Rodriguez 2010: 115). One BCCM counsellor expressed the perceived vulnerability of young people in stark terms. I asked her:

CM: “*Anong ginagawa ninyo para sa mga kabataan? Paano makatulong ka sa kanila?*” (What do you do for the youth? How are you able to help them?)

C: “*Natuturo kami. Kasi, para kabataan ng Pilipinas, mayroon problema, problema ng droga, ng inom. Kailangan nila ang dirihi. Kung wala silang edukasyon tungkol iyan, mayroon problema sila, dahil yung maraming pera, wala silang disiplina.*” (We teach. Because, for the youth of the Philippines, there are many problems, problems with drugs, with drinking. They need guidance. If they don’t have education about that, they will have many problems, because when they have lots of money, they lack discipline.)

Of course, the tendency to consider Filipino youth in migrant families exclusively in terms of their morality or ‘delinquency’ is problematic. In the next section, the effects of this ‘emic’ theory of youth are explored in relation to cultural definitions of childhood, and the intersection of anxieties over *kabataan* with those surrounding money. The BCCM, adhering rhetorically to its Catholic mission, attempted to preserve morally loaded familial relations - especially marital fidelity and supportive child raising - among a demographic that it viewed as ‘at risk’. The BCCM was trying to overcome the negative effects of money by encouraging practices that dissuaded families from morally hazardous profligacy. Investing, saving and, most crucially, spending money on schooling, would not necessarily avert the risks to familial relationships, but together represented a ‘cognate’ collection of behaviours in the face of the moral peril of labour migration.

The PFW members held similarly ambivalent views on the money of remittances, anxious over its connection to two means by which the Philippines was being exploited: labour export and corruption. However, their solution was to re-appropriate it, directing flows of remittances that might otherwise be accrued as private wealth into the offering of schooling to those who could not afford it. Both of these sets of practices indicate certain ideologies surrounding kinship, schooling, and money, and in the next section I consider exactly how these relate to one another through two strands of analysis. First by employing Jonathan Parry and Maurice Bloch’s model of transactional orders to think through the effects of remittances, and second by using anthropologies and sociologies of child-

hood to further explore how children and youth came to occupy positions of moral salience in relation to ideologies of kinship.

Money, Kinship and the Value of Children

In their introduction to *‘Money and the Morality of Exchange’*, Parry & Bloch enlist a selection of ethnographic case studies to suggest an overarching theory of money and its uses. They suggest that where moral economies governing relations with kin or other insiders prohibit those relations involving ‘market’ or commercial transactions, people will develop two ‘transactional orders’. One will deal with outsiders with whom one can exchange worrisome and contaminated money (characterised by competitiveness and antipathy), and another will ‘de-contaminate’ money for usage in intimate spheres and between those who cannot ‘trade’ in a commercial sense. The authors associate the former with the individual and the short-term, the latter “with the reproduction of the long-term social or cosmic order” (1989: 24). By transferring money from one to the other, it is “transform[ed] from a subversive and threatening force into something moral and socially positive” (*ibid*: 23). Primarily the authors refer to Janet Carsten’s material on ‘cooking money’ in Pulau Langkawi in Malaysia, where the passage of earnings ‘through the house’ from men’s income to food cooked by women removes the taint of commercial and individualistic values and imbue money with the ideals of kinship and socialisation (1989: 132).

Parry & Bloch’s work has commonly been utilised to bolster claims for the cultural relativism of money, and the particularities of its uses, especially when these uses are (from a ‘Western’ capitalist perspective) unfamiliarly intimate, creative, and non-alienated. Indeed, this kind of analysis is certainly applicable to the material in this chapter. The variety of sending mechanisms, arbitrators and moral and symbolic attachments to particular amounts of money sent into the Philippines indicates a need to differentiate the monolithic terminology of ‘remittance’. Instances of this include the varying significance of different kinds of ‘money gifts’ sent by Filipino mothers to their children at home (Fresnoza-Flot 2009: 259), or the money sent specifically for the purchase of a pig to be used in a healing ritual (McKay 2010: 8).

Mark Johnson (1998b), following Weiner (1992), also describes how women in Sulu would buy 'traditional' jewellery and clothing as a means to turn money into 'inalienable' wealth (or, in Parry & Bloch's terms, to 'de-contaminate' it), and he hints at the positive aspects of the displaced position money holds for migrant women in his account of one woman - Piang - buying a hamburger in Kuwait. While Piang believes that the sensible thing to do with her money is to "be careful" and save it, having spent the money on a consumable good for herself, Johnson suggests that part of the appeal is to extract money she has earned from the "circulation of shared remembrances" represented by traditional jewellery (1998b: 231-232).

In the remainder of this section I want to employ this insight into transactional orders to frame how the PFW in particular chose to fund schooling. To apply their theory directly, the realm of remittances represents the commercial, competitive transactional order, where wage labour (often in poor conditions and poorly remunerated) is the norm, and potentially shaming hardships must be endured in order to gain any reward. This order is viewed as short term, as it is characterised by sometimes large and irregular windfalls, and was viewed to be a stimulant to flippant expenditure and consumption. One way of 'de-contaminating' this money is to give it to someone invested in a long-term outcome, that can be considered moral, and is agreed upon to be socially positive. By donating to the PFW, and by organising the redistribution of wealth within it, the migrants in Palaw and overseas were able to mediate the awkward symbolism of the money of remittances.

In this context, the exchange between myself, Ronald and Isabela captures the contradictions surrounding schooling and labour for young people in Palaw and Santa Clara. The PFW was keen to alleviate the barriers to entering the schooling system for poorer students through negotiating remittance economies, and so positioned itself in contrast to the government, who had mishandled and failed to fairly distribute resources from labour export to those for whom education and work overseas was unobtainable. In this way, they hoped to set a means of translating the money of remittances into the money of education, 'cleansing' it of its short-termism and instead allowing it to contribute to an long-term, 'glorious' goal of an internally sustainable Philippines.

The precise mechanics of this are revealed through the normative values ascribed to children and youth, respectively. In academic work on *kabataan*, much emphasis is placed on the need to measure the degree to which young people, generally defined in the literature as between the ages of 15-30, are a risk to smooth social reproduction. Relationships with authority within and outside the family are a recurrent theme (Stoodley 1957; Hernandez 1980), and related to an interest in gang membership (Jocano 1969; Joe & Chesney-Lind 1995). Much scholarship is motivated by the desire to make “morally upright” (Ogena 1999: 84) persons out of youths and discusses the possibilities of this production in relation to changing lifestyles, including mass media consumption (Cruz, Laguna & Raymundo 2001), sexual behaviour and views on sex (Ogena 1999: 91; Cabigon 1999; Upadhyay, Hindin & Gultiano 2006). Gerry Lanuza’s critique of this perspective, and of the moralising tone of youth studies in the Philippines, captures such problems and further targets a tendency to frame young people’s ‘cultural production’ and generational changes in norms as a failure of social function: “unconventional behaviour of youth - e.g. delinquency, homosexuality, activism - are explained as the failure of society to integrate young people into the adult world” (2004: 363).

The literature on *kabataan* shares concerns with earlier treatments of the ‘Filipino family’ within the tradition of ‘culture and personality’ studies in the Philippines, which attempted to isolate a distinctive ‘Filipino psychology’ (*sikolohiyang Pilipino*) (Enriquez 1977)⁵⁸ and discern particular ‘Filipino values’. As ‘*pakikisama*’ (sociability and hospitality, also termed ‘smooth interpersonal relations’ or ‘SIR’), ‘*pakikiramdam*’ (sensitivity to the feelings of others) and ‘*utang na loob*’ (sense of indebtedness - on the ‘inside’ of the person - underlying social relations) (Jocano 1995, 2001) were all identified and established as important qualities of functional Filipino society, their transgression invited moral condemnation. Some of these kinds of studies set about compiling a laundry list of ‘Filipino’ characteristics that defined other social norms, many of which pertained to kinship relations, and especially to parent-child relations. Examples include: maternal devotion and care for infants; expectations of filial piety in children; obedience of children towards parents; mothers fostering reliance of their children on them; and stern punishments for disobedience (Licuanan 1979).

Cheryll Alipio, who studied the transnational families of Filipino seafarers, provides an intellectual history (cf. Gibson 1986: 45) of how the concept *utang na loob* became central to kinship studies in the Philippines (2009: 63-81), including through the work of Frank Lynch (1959), Charles Kaut (1961), and Mary Hollnsteiner (1968; 1973). Crucially for the present argument, Hollnsteiner stressed the importance of children's peculiar position of indebtedness (their *utang na loob*) to their parents for the care they received in infancy (1973: 76), and for the gift of life itself (Rafael 1988: 128). The importance of this particular debt is expressed too through sanctions against those who do not respond to parents' wishes, and the '*awa*' (pity) felt towards those without children (Hollnsteiner 1973: 76).

These kind of accounts of 'Filipino' characteristics are often-criticised, for reasons I will explore in the next chapter, though they reflect views that were still held by many of my informants in Batangas;⁵⁹ for instance, parents were sometimes said to have given the 'gift of life' (*kaloob na buhay*) to their children. A corresponding view, that parents held an ultimate responsibility for their children, and that parents' - particularly mothers' - love should be unparalleled in its affection and sacrifice were also seen to be especially Filipino traits.⁶⁰ As noted in the discussion of households and 'downward-looking kinship' (Geertz & Geertz 1964; Carsten 1995b, 1997) in Southeast Asia in chapter 2, the value of children to parents extended beyond indebtedness, too, as it is through conceiving children that kinship, marriage and social reproduction is thought to be successful. These views were presented to me as part of a representational or normative construction of 'the family', but the experiences of the PFW scholars and other descriptions of everyday interactions between kin suggest the need to complicate how this construction actually impacted upon family members' existence.

Allison Pugh (2009) has shown how the flow of money between parents and children - in her case, within a number of different American households with differing incomes - can have profound and complex effects on the moral value of both the children and their parents, in both their perspectives and in wider moral registers. The historical setting for the interplay between economy and morality in American parent-child relations is explored in

Viviana Zelizer's '*Pricing the Priceless Child*' (1985). Zelizer provides a compelling historical trajectory of children in work in Europe and North America, asking how and why children became removed from the workplace in the early years of the twentieth century, where previously they had been commonplace. She argues that between 1870 and 1930 a profound cultural conflict was fought over the moral meanings that could be ascribed to children as useful or useless (1985: 72). This was a "shift in children's value from 'object of utility' to object of sentiment" that recast children into 'sacralised' persons inhabiting an 'extra-commercial' social space (*ibid*: 7-11).

While referring to a distinct historical and cultural circumstance, the position of children within the 'affective economy' of kinship in Batangas can be framed within the same dynamics of moral and economic value. The articulations of money and morality present in Zelizer's work (1985; 2010) are comparable with Alipio's research into Filipino seafarers' reflections on their obligations to their parents, particularly in trainees' explicit connections between the support they were offered as children by family members, and the ability to financially support them that they now enjoyed (2009: 79; cf. Coe 2011). In Batangas the labour value of children actually fell somewhere in between "economically useless but emotionally priceless" (Zelizer 1985: 57) and chattel indefinitely bound to serve their parents: the specifics of this are the focus of the next chapter, particularly in my discussion of young girls who work as so-called '*katulong*' (domestic helpers).

This balance between labour and moral value provides an initial answer as to why the PFW was predominantly concerned with education. While the PFW wanted to 'de-contaminate' remittances, the 'moral currency' conveyed through relations with children and youth was so powerful because of the persistent dominance of the reproduction of 'the family' in the continuation of the Philippines itself. This connection is indicated by Ronald's concern about the fate of the nation-state, and the worry that it could continue to 'lose' its children. This is a symptom of the fact that, both rhetorically and ideologically, OFWs have experienced attempts to turn affective relations between kin into emotional engagements with the nation. Johan Lindquist describes how the emotion of shame (*malu*) felt by Indonesian migrants confronting the failures in their own migrations is ex-

perienced in terms of one's connection to the nation: "One is *malu* to return 'home' without having anything to show for the time one has spent in the *rantau* [abroad] ... In this context *malu* appears as an emotion that describes the failures to live up to the ideals of the nation" (2004: 503).

Caroline Hau - following Iletto (1979) - has shown a similar process occurring discursively in the Philippines, in that populist framings of parents' separations from their children as a sacrifice references religious and spiritual idioms that historically held, and continue to hold, significances shifted and appropriated from Catholic doctrine to be employed in nationalist (and other) purposes (Hau 2004: 150). The "assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development" enshrined in the 1987 constitution also, argues Cheryll Alipio, reinforces the sense of indebtedness and obligation between children as a generation and the nation-state (2009: 71).

However, it would be inaccurate to describe these processes as simply a means by which nationalist discourse 'appropriates' and deploys the more 'primal' symbols of kinship. In *Vital Relations*, Susan McKinnon and Fenella Cannell argue that "[i]n 'modern', state-based societies ... kinship is understood to be relegated to the domestic domain and divested of its political and economic functions" (2013: 5). The authors argue that, in modernity, constructions of the nation-state (and many anthropological accounts of them) insist on categories of political organisation that are in some way hierarchically and evolutionarily superior to the 'primitive' affiliations of kin; they "contest the idea that kinship is a social formation that can be understood exclusively as historically prior or structurally subordinate to the nation-state and that the nation (or state) can be conceptualised apart from its entanglements with kinship" (2013: 23).⁶¹

In the modernity of the Philippine nation-state, one can see aspects of this divestment, for instance in the animosity shown towards elite clan oligarchy and corruption in political institutions (Bello et al 2005). However, at the same time the myriad ideologies of 'the family' - a totem of Parsonian modernism in family organisation, the social form an-

chored to elite representations such as those analysed by Alfred McCoy, a sign of national moral superiority (see introduction) - come to exercise more influence over normative ideas about what domains familial relations *should* occupy. This is similar to what Michael Lambek describes as “both growing detachment from kin and retraction of the sphere of kinship *and* excessive attachment, for instance in the United States, to ‘family values’” (Lambek 2013: 241).

In the context of rapid changes to everyday kinship and material conditions, and the view of the Philippines as a network of affective relations becoming more and more extended and strained, the PFW and BCCM at once perpetuated and challenged hegemonic ideologies of ‘the family’. While they reproduced modernist rhetoric of kinship’s distinction from spheres of economy and politics, they also merged kinship into them via the flow of money and appeals to an affective nationalism and were simultaneously contributing to a redefinition of forms that would re-legitimise transnational kinship. This conflicted engagement with the morality of transnational kinship renders visible the differences between some of the contested ‘versions’ of kinship in the Philippines, such as the modernist nuclear family, or the political ‘clan’, and the extended ‘*kamag-anak*’ (relatives) or ‘*pamilya*’ (family).

Conclusion

By using Parry & Bloch’s theory of transactional orders, an explicit link can be made between the moral value attached to the money of remittances and the relations disrupted in order to accumulate it. Money from work overseas could be ‘decontaminated’ by channelling it into the socially reproductive and morally virtuous practice of schooling. But this was not the only practice of ‘decontamination’ at play. In an inversion of Parry & Bloch’s schema, it is possible to theorise both the effects of morally problematic money on social relations, *and* the effects of money on morally problematic social relations. The inequality and potentially fraught logics of indebtedness between children and adults, and the possibility of *kabataan* slipping into immoral and unproductive social relations, threaten a breakdown of social reproduction. The money of remittances, thoroughly embedded in national and familial responsibility, softens the perceived intergenerational con-

flict, so that young people themselves are “transform[ed] from a subversive and threatening force into something moral and socially positive” (Parry & Bloch 1989: 23). Taken together, these processes constitute a means through which economy, nation and kin remain ‘vital’ in everyday life in Batangas.

However, the PFW membership’s desire to reach a point in the trajectory of the Philippine nation when migrating for work would no longer be necessary was thwarted by the appropriation by the state of schooling as a technology of labour production. Since, as discussed in chapter 1, American governance in the Philippines was envisioned as ‘tutelary’, and the institution of schooling so central to its execution, the articulation between an exploitative colonial regime and education itself is difficult to overcome. In the modern, post-independence state, processes by which the unequal and divisive distribution of remittances are mediated by their absorption into education and schooling thus become somewhat ambiguous, simultaneously animating nationalist desires about the (less ‘dispersed’) future of the nation-state and perpetuating the geopolitics and extractions of global capitalism. For young people, as the subjects of this contradiction, work abroad continues to offer a more prosperous future than work in the Philippines. Consequently, the activities of PFW’s wealthy organisers are paradoxical in that while attempting to alleviate one moral transgression by the political economy that remittances reproduce, they shored up a separate means by which labour in the Philippines is dominated by the interests of capital.

The kinds of relationship between adults and children discussed in this chapter tended to be normative representations, parsed in terms ideological relations between parents and children, or between philanthropist and beneficiary. In the next chapter, I explore in more depth how intergenerational politics actually manifested in everyday life in Batangas, and explore how far this model of child-adult relation actually serves as a (contested) model for all intergenerational interactions.

Chapter 5

Helping and Hanging Out:

'Barkada', debt and intergenerational politics

Introduction

A joke that I was told on numerous occasions during my fieldwork ran thus: “Why do Filipino families have so many children? Because during the brownouts, there isn’t much else to do than make more of them!” This joke was most often told to me in mock self-deprecation (of both personal weaknesses and the electricity infrastructure) and with a smile and a shrug by fathers and mothers of eight or nine children, but it also sometimes came up in another context entirely. While large households were often lauded as desirable in Batangas for a number of reasons (discussed later in this chapter), public discourse associating large numbers of children with poverty, backwardness and lack of education had some purchase with particular individuals. Complicating this kind of dispute, during my fieldwork I encountered fierce debate over the Reproductive Health (RH) bill: a law passed in 2012 and debated until it was upheld in August 2013, designed (amongst other things) to allow access to contraception at public clinics, of which there was one in Palaw. In Palaw, the local Catholic Church erected a gigantic red banner proclaiming “No to RH” in mid 2012 that dominated the plaza in the centre of the town. Consequently, the joke was brought up in rather more knowing tones when people wanted to reflect on societal problems, secularisation, divisions between rural and urban community, and concerns over modernisation. One such case occurred during a *jeepney* ride with a group of high school teachers, on our way back from an outing to the beach to celebrate the end of term.

One of the male teachers had told the joke, eliciting some giggles, and I asked if they thought this was the real reason that so many couples had upwards of four children. The teachers first agreed that having lots of children brought more happiness (*masaya*) into the household, that it showed more love between the couple, and provided more helpers who could look after the parents in old age - all explanations I had heard before. The discussion then turned, however, to the problems of having large families. A number of the

teachers reflected on some of their students from poorer, remote, rural households who came from large families, who had to look after younger siblings, and didn't receive attention from their parents. Finally, one teacher said that in families like these, there are so many children thanks to couples marrying at a very young age. There was widespread agreement that this was a factor, but a caveat was offered by another teacher, a 22 year-old young woman who was engaged to marry in the next couple of months. Having children young could be desirable, even for middle-class teachers, as the proximity in age between you and your child meant that they could be in your '*barkada*'. The other teachers were in agreement.

This suggestion surprised me for a number of reasons. The Tagalog word '*barkada*' is most often glossed as 'friendship group'. However, as I will discuss in more depth later, in discussions such as this one with the teachers that reflected on friendships and family, many of my informants who were students would regularly describe *barkada* relationships as deeper (*mas matindi*) or closer (*mas malapit*) than those with family members. My own observations of familial relations in Palaw suggested a network of fairly demanding but also deeply affective obligations and responsibilities between siblings and across generations, and I had not before encountered the suggestion that parent-child relations could be framed as friendships - or it could even be preferable to do so. While, in the end, I didn't encounter a *barkada* grouping that did incorporate a parent and child during my fieldwork, the use of friendship (*pagkakaibigan*) as a metaphor with which to describe positive vertical kin relations was in fact commonplace and surprising. Strong relations between fathers and sons were sometimes described to me in these terms: "*Eh, kuya Kris, si John at tatay niya, matulad na mabuting kaibigan sila*" (Eh, Chris, John and his father are like good friends together). While sentiments of friendship across generations and between close kin are not unique to the Philippines, in this chapter I will argue that this kind of framing of relationships has particular significances, and should be taken seriously.

The episode with the teachers (and frequent other assertions of the closeness of *barkada* relationships) alerted me to the powerful effects being in a *barkada* could have on the

relationships between people, and particularly between children and adults. In this chapter I begin by describing terminology that people in Batangas used for different kinds of social relations; specifically the actions *matulong* (helping) and *matambay* (hanging out), which invite a comparison between one kind of relationship with adults - that of patronage - and another, within the *barkada*. By then analysing cases of the various forms that patronage relations took in Palaw are presented, with an emphasis on children's perspectives of them, I hope to show that anthropologies of childhood can equip anthropological analysis with an 'intergenerational lens', which is capable of revealing other anthropologies of kinship, debt, politics and hierarchy. In examining the *barkada* I deploy the anthropology of friendship to a similar end, but question how much is left out of a direct opposition between kinship and friendship in this case. Finally, I want to suggest a contribution to the anthropology of youth and childhood by encouraging ethnographic study of children's and young people's 'worlds' to refocus onto their engagements with adults and their 'embeddedness' in intergenerational relations.

'Matulong' and 'Utang na Loob'

Despite my fieldwork being based in two educational institutions, a great deal of the time I spent with students was outside of school. Collectively, time outside of school was called '*pasatiyempo*' (free time), despite students not necessarily being able to do as they pleased. When reflecting generally on what they liked to do, and what they could do, in their *pasatiyempo* students usually differentiated between two different kinds of activities. The primary use of free time was '*matambay*', which I've translated as 'hanging out'. Although '*tambay*' could include all kinds of activities, it always referred to a social activity (or inactivity) performed with a group of friends, often (but not always) of the same age, and it was also always enjoyable. Perhaps obviously, it is this type of action and the relationships it requires that constituted students' *barkada*, and I return to it later in the chapter.

The second type of activity constituted a student's responsibilities beyond their schoolwork, usually expressed in terms of "*matulong sa mga magulang ko*" (helping my parents), "*matulong sa pamilya*" (helping my family). '*Tulong*' (translated as 'help') could

be extended beyond familial relations, but was almost always directed to someone superior in age ranking. For the students, *tulong* was seldom pleasant; a more or less necessary burden on their spare time that they would rather spend doing *tambay*. What interests me about *tulong* of children and young people is that it was the most obvious manifestation in my field site of the much broader relational concept of *utang*, or debt. Now I will look more closely at this connection, and the opposition students made between *tulong* and *tambay*.

Tulong was used in a variety of contexts in Palaw and Santa Clara. Neither locale could be described as particularly individuated; most people would be involved in some way in the affairs and projects of their neighbours. However, a general definition of the kinds of activity that constituted ‘helping’ is difficult to reach, precisely because the usage of *tulong* often referred less to the action itself and more to the relationship between people that action signified. Its meaning varied depending on whether the ‘helper’ (*katulong*) or the ‘helped’ was in a position of greater status or economic power: generally, if a helper was of lower status, the help they gave was usually labour of some kind. If they were of a higher status, help would often be monetary, but could also be a more abstract form of assistance, such as political advocacy, advice or even emotional support. In this sense, the networks of *tulong* that I discerned in Palaw and Santa Clara throughout my fieldwork matched closely to the kinds of diffuse social organisation and fluid systems of debt and obligation that have been extensively studied in ethnography of the Philippines and often referred to as *utang na loob* (debt of the inside).

In classic ethnography of the Philippines, *utang na loob* is considered to encompass not only an economic debt of labour but also the moral threat of exclusion from social relations. The term gained the most attention as a guiding element of ‘Philippine culture’, and was viewed as central to explaining political economies based the enforcement of reciprocal obligations of service and labour (e.g. Lynch 1959; Kaut 1961; Hollnsteiner 1968). With regard to kin relations, Mary Hollnsteiner in particular implicates other forms of social relations, such as friendship and kinship, in the “spiral of reciprocal favours” which

develops from constant reciprocity and constitutes the organisation of indebtedness (Hollnsteiner 1968: 66).

Although Scott and Rafael both wrote about sixteenth-century Tagalog society, some ethnographies of the twentieth-century Philippines have been critiqued as overly structural-functionalist and ahistorical (Rafael 1988: 123; Cannell 1999: 8, 11, 104): more contemporary studies soften a directly functional application of *utang na loob* as an explanatory system. This more nuanced direction of study encourages scepticism in the analytic usage of *utang na loob*, reinforcing as it does both justifications for colonial and paternalistic modes of authority, and neocolonial explanations for underdevelopment due to indigenous ‘values’ (San Juan 2006: 49-50). Ethnographic studies reveal how the concept operates within and in relation to material systems of politics, class power, and how the inconsistent framings of *utang na loob* in some interpersonal (often unequal) relations expose hierarchy, exploitation and domination (Kerkvliet 2013).

The reason I have begun my own analysis here with an emphasis on *tulong* rather than *utang* (debt) is threefold. First, of course, I am directed by the terminology used by the students themselves. Second, I aim to incorporate critiques of the analytic usage of *utang na loob*, treating it instead as an emic category, as I have done so far in this thesis with other functionalist social theories employed by my informants. Finally, I found that people in Palaw were actually often highly reluctant to voluntarily describe their relationships with others in terms of *utang* or *utang na loob*, except where a formal (often monetary) relationship did exist, in which case they were described only as *utang*.⁶² For example, farmers who could afford to rent sugar fields from landowners to grow their own cash crop always characterised their relationship with the landlords as one of *utang*, but less often in terms of help. Carlos, a leaseholder for a plot of sugar cane near the edge of Palaw described his relationship to the Bermudez family⁶³ that owned the land explicitly in terms of debt: “*may utang ko sa kanila, sa pamilya nila, para sa lupa*” (I have debt to them, to their family, for the land).

However, my expectation that his relationship with the Bermudez family might be similar to those described by Benedict Kerkvliet as ‘patron-client ties’ (2013: 220-227), in which economic patronage (the lease of land) led to associated kinds of assistance that might be classified as *tulong*, was rejected: “*Hindi sila matulong sa amin, at hindi kami hingin*” (They don’t help us, and we don’t ask). Such a response, in which *utang* and *tulong* were differentiated as aspects of unequal relationships, was highly typical. Early in my fieldwork, when I would observe an arrangement of obligation between people, I would often ask, “*May utang ka ba sa kanya?*” (Do you have debt to him/her?). Responses ranged from chuckles to frowns, but almost always corrected my mistake by saying, “*hindi, matutulong ako lang*” (no, I’m just helping). Responses from the recipients similarly preferred ‘help’ to ‘debt’ when characterising these obligations.

Despite my experience that *utang* was not favoured as a means of describing some unequal relationships, most people in Palaw and Santa Clara were happy to accept that systems of economic obligation and indebtedness existed, and maybe even characterised Philippine society more generally. Especially, sentiments such as ‘*kawit-kawit*’ (Kerkvliet 2013: 210), meaning ‘everyone is related’, also emerged in Palaw, where several older residents told me that it used to be the case that everyone in the town was a distant cousin (*pinsan*) of one another. Though this characterisation of Philippine communities kinship and politics was considered to be diminishing (due to migration, greater mobility, and greater rates of exogamy) by most, I saw it as a reflection on a normative expectation - that relations of obligation and cooperation were seen to exist throughout the local community, by one means or another. Children and young people were certainly not exempt from wider framings of social relations in terms of obligation, though they experienced particular kinds of relationships. Here, I am concerned with the practicalities of the emphasis placed on obligation experienced by children, most commonly manifested in being constantly required to ‘help’.

Where the position of unequal relationships involving children in the Philippines has been examined previously, emphasis has often been placed on the ‘*kumare/pare*’ (godparent) relationship, and the roles generated for both children and their families by ritual co-

adoption practices such as '*compadrinazgo*' (Hart 1977). In Palaw and Santa Clara, I found that while almost universal, godparent-hood was far from the only form of patronage extended by adults to children other than their own, nor was it necessarily always the strongest kind of tie that could be made between young people and their patron. Similarly, children's senses of obligation and subsequent acquiescence with demands to 'help' also featured in a variety of different relations. What follows is a number of examples of non-ritualised relationships across generations (and across boundaries of status and power) that were explained to me in terms of exchanges of 'help'.

Case 1: Mr Joseph and Victor

In chapter 1 I considered, in terms of class relations, the role of the high school teacher Mr Joseph as a mentor and role model for a retinue of students in whom he took an extra interest outside of school. One of these students was Victor, a seventeen-year-old who transferred from the third to fourth year and then graduated while I was in Palaw. Mr Joseph had taken a special interest in Victor throughout his education due to a particularly unfortunate set of circumstances that had befallen him. When he was much younger, Victor's father had left his mother and run away from Batangas, leaving her with four children and no household income. For nearly two years, Victor's mother had been subjected to abuse and ostracised by members of her own family, was often drunk and was unable to find regular work in the town. As a result of this unstable domestic environment and the lack of money, Victor had been unable to complete the remaining years of his elementary school education, and his family experienced severe poverty.

However, in 2006 when the new Palaw National High School opened, and there was an enrolment drive for rural youth who did not attend school already, as an eleven-year-old Victor was eligible. Mr Joseph had met Victor previously through a rural education program organised by a Catholic private school in Santa Clara (his previous employer), and encouraged him to enrol. Mr Joseph vouched for Victor's academic ability so that he could enrol despite his failure to complete elementary school, and as Victor began to attend the high school again, he visited his house to help him with his schoolwork, gave his

mother lifts to the market in his car, and even hosted Victor at his own house where they shared meals with Mr Joseph's family.

His most significant act of patronage, however, was to pay for and organise Victor's circumcision at age twelve. Most boys in Batangas received their circumcision between ages 5-7, often with a cohort of other boys of a similar age.⁶⁴ Although a specialist, be it a traditional healer or a surgeon, would actually perform this rite, it was considered appropriate for an older male relative, sometimes an uncle or grandfather, but usually a godparent, to oversee the preparations, ritual cleansing (applying a chewed guava leaf to the wound) and recovery of any young boy who was circumcised. As, in ostracising their family, Victor's immediate kin had overlooked their responsibilities his mother's children, Victor had not been circumcised, and this had led to several incidences of (sometimes violent) bullying. This was due to being labelled with the highly undesirable term '*supot*', literally meaning uncircumcised, but commonly used pejoratively by teenage boys and young men to mean unmanly, womanlike, homosexual or sexually meek.⁶⁵ Victor reflected that because he had not had the operation, "*noon, 'di ko pa nagiging ang lalaki, at lahat ang mga kaibigan, lalaki na*" (back then, I had yet not become a man, and all my friends were already men).

Mr Joseph's payment for Victor's circumcision, within the context of the rest of his patronage, was described to me as a particularly remarkable act of *tulong*, and importantly an unsolicited one. It was not uncommon for parents of new-borns to approach a better off friend or relative to become the godparent of their child, nor was it uncommon for them to then financially support them through rites of passage such as enrolment in school, graduation, and marriage. But in this case, Victor's mother had never asked for Mr Joseph's impromptu acts of helping, and no ritualised kin relation existed between them. Mr Joseph joked when describing his relationship with Victor that "I do all this, but I am not even his *kupare!*", and when pushed on his motivation, he emphasised the desire "simply to help".

However, my questioning on why Mr Joseph ‘helped’ Victor and other students led him to spontaneously offer descriptions of the ways which they assisted him in various tasks. During my fieldwork, Victor was summoned by Mr Joseph on a number of occasions to assist him with preparing food at Mr Joseph’s house for transport to church meetings, and several times friends of Mr Joseph who he wanted to assist would find themselves helped out by a cadre of students from the school. These tasks involved a variety of projects, including assembling furniture at a new house, transporting chickens, and setting up a house for a wedding anniversary party. Victor certainly did not begrudge being asked to do these things, but did not express the same purely altruistic motives of the ‘help’ Mr Joseph had directed at him. Rather, he would explain that “*kailangan ko matulong sa kanya, siyempre, dahil sa ang matulong niya sa akin*” (I have to help him, of course, because of the help he gave to me).

Case 2: Jesusa’s Household

Jesusa, whose house I lived in during my fieldwork, was wealthy enough to be able to employ domestic workers as maids, cooks, and clothes washers. Most of the women who occupied these roles lived locally in the town, and would come to the household only on certain days to wash clothes, or on special occasions to cook a large meal. The most regular work in the household, however, was the role of ‘helper’ (*katulong*) or maid, who would perform a number of cleaning and domestic maintenance chores, but also look after Jesusa’s eleven-year-old daughter, Akari. During most of my time in the house, Jesusa employed an eighteen-year-old girl named Pearl in this role. Pearl, who had completed elementary school but never gone to high school, had got the job in the first place by assisting her aunt’s work from about the age of thirteen. Her aunt had been a *katulong* too, in another wealthy household in the town for a secretary of the Department of Social Work and Development, who had in turn suggested to Jesusa that Pearl could work for her.

While many domestic ‘helpers’ in Palaw and Santa Clara did not enjoy secure or long-term employment, and often worked in several different houses, Pearl’s position in the household was more significant than a transient servant. Jesusa was always very con-

cerned about Akari's wellbeing, particularly her socialisation, and fretted that she might be too shy (*maumid*). Because her father was Japanese, and lived with her older brother in Tokyo, she neither enjoyed the comfort and support of having siblings in the house, nor the presence of her father's side of the family in close proximity. In addition, Jesusa had sent Akari to a private school in Santa Clara, so she did not have as many friends in the town to play with. Because of these factors Akari was encouraged to be, and had become, very close with Pearl. Pearl had worked for Jesusa since Akari was only eight, and because Pearl's family lived in a remote farmstead in a neighbouring *barangay*, Jesusa had accommodated her in the house, setting up a bed in Akari's room to allow her to live-in. Akari called Pearl 'ate', and despite the term 'ate' (lit. older sister) being routinely used by the young to refer to older women in the Tagalog Philippines, Jesusa made more explicitly clear the quasi-familial relation created by Pearl's presence by often referring to the two girls as "*matulad na totoong kapatid*" (like true siblings).

About six months before the end of my fieldwork, however, Pearl's mother became ill, and Pearl had to move back to the neighbouring *barangay* to look after her, eventually taking another job in a house much closer to her own. Her leaving upset Akari, and Jesusa was anxious to bring a new helper into the household. Her solution was to offer assistance to Lalu, a girl who had been enlisted as a scholar by the Palaw Foundation Worldwide (PFW), the charitable foundation run by Jesusa discussed in chapter 4. Lalu had come from an unfortunate background, as her mother had moved to work in a paper factory in Manila when she was three years old, then her father had died suddenly from an illness. Her father's older brother had reluctantly taken her in, but he had treated her very cruelly, refusing to feed her if her mother failed to send him large enough portions of her salary. In 2007, her mother had returned and forced her brother-in-law to allow Lalu to attend high school, and preventing him from pushing her into contributing to his household income by doing domestic work after she finished elementary school. As her mother had had to move back to Manila to work, she had struggled to continue to pay for schooling, and the Foundation had provided a scholarship for Lalu since the middle of 2012.

Because of the unsuitability of her home life at her uncle's house, and because of the absence of other family members willing to take her in,⁶⁶ Jesusa had encouraged Lalu to stay in her house, taking on some of the roles vacated by Pearl. Lalu's position in the household differed in important ways from Pearl's however, as it was premised not on the relationship of an employer and wage-labourer, but on the already substantially unequal relation between her as the recipient of charitable 'help' from the Foundation, and Jesusa's role as its founder and secretary. Because of this, she was unpaid for the substantial amount of housework she did, and was expected to spend the majority of her *pasatiyempo* helping Jesusa and entertaining Akari. Such was the expectation that she remain active and continue to 'help', so as to justify her position in the household, that she often spent long periods sweeping already clean floors.

Case 3: Joy

Whereas the cases of Lalu and Victor represent incidents where the 'help' they offered to Jesusa and Mr Joseph respectively covered represented unpaid labour, Pearl's acts of 'helping' as a *katulong* were also categorised as work, and earned her a salary, albeit reduced due to Jesusa's provision of her meals and accommodation. Pearl's situation, as a high school 'non-attende', was less comparable to the students, however, than some other young people who simultaneously worked and attended school. In previous chapters, the labour of the students at the vocational college has been considered, though again their circumstances did not necessarily compare to that of high school students who held jobs. This was partly due to the more conducive environment at the college, at which part-time work was actively encouraged, and a less strict schedule offered students more time away from classes. At the high school, the only times work was feasible for students was at weekends and during school holidays, and during these periods many did do work.

When surveyed, 83% of the high school students in the class I studied said that they did work outside of school, and when asked in more detail about this work subsequently, every student questioned revealed that part of this work involved 'helping' their parents or parents' siblings in their small businesses. Due to there being only a small proportion of families in Palaw that relied exclusively on farming for their income (either through

landowning, leasing, or labouring) very few students at the high school did not have connections to a close family member with a business endeavour to whom they could offer their labour. 'Helping' at a *sari-sari* (convenience) store might involve carrying boxes or minding the shop while its owner ran an errand, or at a garage, young boys were often given the job of washing cars (a highly desirable job during the hot Easter holidays).

Although most students pursued work with close family members, some poorer families did not have the necessary connections to establish such work. One example of this was Joy, a seventeen-year-old student at the ALS (Alternative Learning System), the same institution mentioned in chapter 7. The ALS was a nationwide program of specialist schooling facilities set up in areas with high rates of 'out-of-school youth' with the aim of reintegrating them into the state schooling system and giving them new opportunities to complete their high school qualifications. Joy had been forced to stop her high school career at the age of fourteen, not long before she would have graduated, due to her family focussing their financial efforts onto her older sister, who was studying to be a teacher in Santa Clara. Joy's own desire was to be a teacher too, but was sceptical about her family's ability to put a second child through college, as they lived in a remote compound with little land attached to it, and also had to support the families of two younger siblings of her father. Her hope was that her elder sister would be able to earn enough to pay for her education, but meanwhile she had endeavoured to complete high school under her own steam.

She had done this by swapping one form of labour for another. From a very young age, she recounted, she had worked in her family's compound, where her tasks as a younger girl mostly included sweeping, preparing food, feeding chickens and the family's pig, and being on hand to assist her older female relatives with whatever tasks they also had to attend to. While she was also attending school, she had to do these chores in the evenings, and could do them with her older cousins (*pinsan*) and siblings, but after she was taken out of school, the compound and farm became more tiresome places to be: "*Sa bahay natin, merun mga bunso ko lang, kasi ang mga pinsan ko ang trabaho, ang pasok sa*

poblasyon. Bato-bato na!” (at our house, there are just my younger siblings, because all my cousins are working or attending school in the town. Its very boring!)

Weary of the company of the younger family members, and eager to spend more time with people her own age, Joy had approached the brother-in-law of her eldest maternal aunt, a bank administrator who had a large house on the main road from Palaw to Tagaytay, to ask for work. Her approach had been successful - “*matulong siya sa akin, at nabayad siya ang kaunti sahod*” (he helped me, and he paid me a little wage) - and she had been working at his house as a *katulong* since she had re-enrolled at the ALS in late 2011. She was extremely positive about this experience, particularly about the house itself, which she described as “*Ganda-ganda, at malinis sa loob. May maraming libro siya, ’lang ensyclopediya, pagkatapos ang malinis, ang mawalis ako, nabasa din!*” (very beautiful, and clean inside. He has lots of books, some encyclopaedias, after I clean and sweep I read the books too!). Here again the flows of ‘*tulong*’ are directed across boundaries between family groups,⁶⁷ but the arrangement was framed by Joy, and by her parents, in terms of the need for Joy to contribute to their household. Her income from her work as a *katulong* was able to substitute for the absence of her labour in the parental house, and pay for the equipment she needed for school. Furthermore, it afforded the excuse for greater mobility, allowing her to go into town to socialise with people her own age more readily. The interplay between this desire and Joy’s negotiations and strategies of ‘help’ in reinforcing aspects of relatedness with her family group is what I introduce in more detail in the following sections.

Adoption, Labour and the Value of Children in Southeast Asian Kinship

Before continuing, it is important to assert how important it was in Batangas to have children in a household, for both the reproduction of kinship and of society more generally. In chapter 2, the constitution of conjugal houses through children has been discussed, and in the previous chapter I argued the centrality of children to the moral value of the family. Anthropological writing on cognatic kinship in island Southeast Asia, since the classification by Hildred and Clifford Geertz (1964) of Balinese commoners’ kinship systems as ‘downward-looking’, in that they stress future generations over ancestors, has been inter-

ested in the ways in which emphasis is placed on lateral, rather than descent relations. Janet Carsten has used the Geertz's model to describe the “‘wide’ rather than ‘deep’” (1997: 272) understandings of kinship systems in Langkawi in Malaysia where siblingship is reckoned as paradigmatic for all other kinship ties (1995: 115). Because of the necessity to ‘produce’ lateral kinship ties, as opposed to their ‘inheritance’ via a descent line, enormous importance is placed on the conception of children and the ‘sharing’ of grandchildren across households - an act which solidifies the shared elements of kinship between grandparents (see also Geertz 1961: 36; Carsten 1997: 272; Cannell 1999: 56).

The affective dimensions of relations of patronage can be considered, I argue, within this framing of ‘sharing’. Recalling the joke from the introduction of this chapter, it is also necessary here to highlight the emotive value that children brought to a house. A household with lots of children was described to me as *masaya* (happy or joyful), though the specific content of this emotion was more revealing. *Masaya*, when used to describe households or families, referred to the activity and vibrancy of life within the house and between kin, and particularly the noise and activity of young children: most adults found the play, conversation and other antics of young children very entertaining. *Masaya* as it was described to me is reminiscent of the notion of ‘*rame*’ or ‘liveliness’ described by Catherine Allerton in her ethnography the Manggarai in Flores, eastern Indonesia (2013: 54). ‘*Rame*’ characterises successful celebrations such as weddings, but it primarily infuses the everyday material and affective actions, such as cooking, eating, and dancing, within the space of the house (*ibid*: 64). Importantly, it is young children that make a house particularly ‘*rame*’ (Allerton 2012: 50), and in this regard I sense some affinity in the value of children informing both *rame* and *masaya*.

In all of the cases described, young people were often placed in positions of subservience to adults, both within and outside of their family groups, in which acts of assistance and fulfilment of obligation between them were characterised in terms of mutual and corresponding help, or *tulong*. In the cases I considered, interactions that constituted *tulong* more often than not generated unequal relationships, where young people became indebt-

ed to their generosity (such as in Victor's and Lalu's cases). However, parties in such positions were eager to dismiss the inequality inherent in these relations, instead choosing to employ *tulong* as a motivation and class of action that invoked pure altruistic intent. Similarly, where these relationships were formed between non-kin, the employment of idioms of *tulong* seemed to generate the metaphorical space for the deployment of kin terminology to describe how affective the relationship was.

The occasionally unstable barrier between wage labourers and younger kin in some households manifests elsewhere in Southeast Asia in the widespread practices of adoption and fosterage (Carsten 1991; Nagasaka 1998). In Flores, when Manggarai children are occasionally sent to live with wealthier kin, this is often explained in terms of "making their house lively", but does also have the purpose of allowing the child easier access to schooling and a 'middle-class lifestyle' in return for domestic labour (Allerton 2012: 50; 2013: 174). Albert Schrauwers (1999) describes a similar practice of fosterage and adoption in Sulawesi, where the wealthy adopted the children of poorer families in order to give them a more secure upbringing. Some adopted children were anxious to earn their position in their adoptive household (and its benefits) by striving to be 'good sons' or 'good daughters' (1999: 312). However, some parents were merely motivated by the desire to expand their domestic labour pool when they couldn't afford servants, and did not elicit affection from their adopted children when they were simply used for free labour; Schrauwers describes how local histories of slavery and class exploitation were indexed by adoptees to describe their relationships with adoptive parents (*ibid.*: 313-314; cf. Jacquemin 2004: 393-394).

Though fostering and adoption in Southeast Asia is occasionally looked upon as a benign - even emancipatory - institution, the potentially negative experiences of children must be foregrounded. A central irony for children exposed to potentially exploitative fostering relationships because of the absence of parents who have migrated is that their care was often a central motivation behind the migration in the first place. As Cati Coe writes of Ghanaian parents negotiating care for their children while overseas (as in case of Lalu), this is a balancing act: "to the extent that a parent's migration leads to better support for a

child, a migrant parent can be a better parent than one who lives in Ghana. However, it is important to highlight that the evaluation of good care is dependent upon the child's expectation of what a parent can provide. In this aspect, there are certain advantages and disadvantages to migration. The allure of migration abroad means that migrant parents are expected to be able to provide more than parents who are living in Ghana" (Coe 2011: 20). In a similar vein, Coe's material also points to an inversion of older patterns of adoption and fostering, in which wealthier families take in poorer children, to a practice of 'wealthy' migrants paying poor families to 'adopt' their children while they are absent (2013: 155-156).

In Palaw, *katulong* such as Pearl operated within a system of patronage and 'helpful' labour in which the relations of senior and junior kin already resembled employer and employee. Though I prefer to stress the affective content of the 'patronage' itself, such relations between 'maid' and 'mistress' in the Philippines have been called 'maternal' (Arnado 2003). Pearl's position in the household was fundamentally different from that of the servants who worked in the 'migrant mansions' mentioned in chapter 2, and in many ways represented what was sometimes called a more '*tradisyonal na katulong*' (traditional helper). The two female employees of the Godoyo household - one of the large houses in Kanluran - slept in a separate building (a small concrete hut within the mansion compound), rather than in the household's bedrooms, and rather than 'helping' the family in their daily domestic tasks, as Pearl did for Jesusa, were expected to do all the work. This situation much more closely matched the arrangement in my hosts' house in Bulaklak 'village', and was also less stable - one of the Godoyo household's *katulong*, Ines, told me that several young women had come and gone in the past year, and that she expected either to quit or to be got rid of soon.⁶⁸ This failure of the 'new' houses to incorporate inclusive forms of kinship such as the *katulong* supports my conclusions in chapter 2.

Barkada, Friendship and Authority

In these cases, *tulong* encapsulates both affective bonds and a system of hierarchy, reciprocity and obligation that invokes but doesn't necessarily match what we might call or-

thodox models of kinship in the Philippines. Moving back now to the type of relations characterised by *tambay*, I find a similar disjuncture, situated within how *barkada* were talked about and experienced. It is my view that *barkada* and *tambay* are closely related, given that a mode of social relations defined by hierarchy and obligation was not particularly enjoyable or relaxing for the majority of the students. *Barkada* fulfilled this role by producing an environment where interpersonal interaction de-emphasised hierarchical difference.

Interest in both friendship's intersections with relations of debt and the institution of the *barkada* dominates the study of friendship in the Philippines. The most evocative historical and ethnographic interventions on the subject are offered by Jean-Paul Dumont, based on his research on the islands of Siquijor and Bohol, in the Visayas. Dumont discusses the word's etymology (1993: 404-406), tracing it back first to the Spanish word for boat, and its usage to refer to gangs of convicted crew members being escorted around the islands to be put to work on plantations; and secondly to the emergence of popular gang movies in the 1950s, which encourage a revival of the word in Manila street slang.

These contexts hint at the potentially non-conformist capabilities of the *barkada*, and Dumont's ethnographic account illuminates its changing political currency. In Siquijor, in the 1980s, he defines *barkada* thus: "Visayan males, first as boys, then as men and well into their old age, belong to and participate actively in ... informal, but class-bound and long-lasting gendered groups of coevals" (*ibid*: 402). Male *barkada* - there were female *barkada*, too (*ibid*: 422) - were the social group in which men found their greatest expressions of conviviality and camaraderie. In his vivid description of the exploits of one *barkada*, two *jeepneys* full of men 'take over' a local beach, drinking rum and beer together, boasting of their exploits, eating unusual and bizarre foods (including a stewed dog and raw fish), and telling off-colour jokes into the small hours (*ibid*: 407). Socialising with one's *barkada* in Siquijor also seemed to offer courage in romance and an excuse for extroversion to otherwise "austere" men, as they accompanied (and encouraged) one another in attempting to seduce the objects of their affection (1995: 18).

However, in the city of Tagbilaran in the early 1990s, their raucousness and what some saw as the unsubtle and uncouth modes of socialisation of the men also attracted detractors: *barkada* was, by the beginning of the 1980s, becoming increasingly associated by the urban bourgeoisie with both ‘lower class’ recreations and with the collapse of ‘family values’ through overemphasis on disruptive male friendships (1993: 410-411). Some of the ‘disruptive’ characteristics of the *barkada* persist in popular perceptions and academic analyses. The gendering of *barkada* (*ibid*: 424-426) has also been ascribed to its requirements on mobility - gender norms prescribed that women usually remain within domestic spaces, limiting their capacity to engage in *barkada* activities, while men had greater freedom of movement to associate together (Morais 1981: 70-71). Some of the meanings and usages of *barkada* referring to immorality and criminality have perpetuated, and the term occupies an ambivalent position in Filipino youth studies, becoming associated with both gang membership (Joe & Chesney-Lind 1995: 427-428) and alcohol consumption (Natividad & Castro 2004: 31). The association of the form of the *barkada* with gang membership, violence and militarism even extends up to the affiliations of political leaders and, in the series of attempted coups following 1986, overzealous loyalty amongst military leadership and officers (McCoy 1995; 1999).

In my own research in Batangas, *barkada* was used universally to mean friendship group, and I usually encountered it when the students I was with wanted to talk about particular groups of friends that went beyond their schoolmates, to include kin, neighbours, and friends from church. When the students at the ISA talked about their hometowns and previous schools, they might mention another *barkada* that they grew up with. Adults also tended to use the term more nostalgically, remembering the antics of their *barkada* from their school days, but it was used occasionally to describe contemporary relationships too. Men acquainted through their working in small troupes, such the trike drivers who ‘*natambay*’ (hung out) in the centre of Palaw waiting for fares, used the term to refer to their favoured colleagues, and would socialise with them when not working too.

As I began to shift my research outside of the confines of the age-defined classrooms and into other spaces of socialisation for the young people attending the high school and col-

lege, the importance of my own ability to establish positions inside *barkada* became more important. Throughout my fieldwork, I would frequently spend time amongst groups of friends and family (both young people and adults, including elderly groups of friends) who characterised their association with one another as *barkada*, but I was affiliated closely with two *barkada*: a group of young teachers at the high school, and a group of college classmates who lived in and around Santa Clara.

Both of these *barkada* were groups of friends who would participate in communal social activities together, be this an outing, play or eating and drinking in a group. The groups were defined by their particular constellation at a given point, and so were able to include any number of individuals with different kinds of social relations outside that particular grouping. The social circles of the students at the high school and college were heavily influenced by their allocation to grade cohorts at their institution, but invariably extended beyond them. Church youth groups and neighbourhood socialisation formed the basis of many *barkada*, but significant numbers of friends would also be drawn from amongst lateral kin. Siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles could be included in the same *barkada*, but would often adopt practices of interaction that asserted their status as friend as distinct from kin.

The *barkada* of the college students I attached myself to included a mixture of male and female friends aged between 16 and 18, who also included in much of their social interaction two older classmates and a third older friend. Paula was aged 30, and had a 4-year-old son, and Renato, also aged 30, was accompanied by his elder brother, aged 38. The sisters of two of the younger students, aged 14 and 15, would also join us on occasion. This disjointed group suggests a difference to the formations of *barkada* described by Dumont in the Visayas, where age cohort, and especially gender, offered a fairly rigid prediction of what group you could belong to (1995: 419-421).

Despite the variation in chronological age, the entire group - including me - considered themselves to belong to one generational group, namely *kabataan*. It was my socialisation with this group that formed the core of my participation with the students at the college

outside of class, and so integrating research practice into activities done by the *barkada* became a significant part of my project. Group discussions on subjects of interest were my most common approach, with everyone sat around eating or drinking, occasionally leaning towards my recorder to speak or passing it around the circle. In the context of the *barkada*, however, attempts by older members to assert authority over any discussion were rare, as were moments of deference by the younger participants.

Within the context of the *barkada*, commonly organised so that the participants sat in a circle to eat and drink, age-based kin terminology were used jokingly and ironically, such as when an elder brother admonished a sibling for swearing, the elder brother was chastened and the sibling hierarchy levelled by mocking cries of ‘*kuya!*’ (older brother), ‘*tiyo!*’ (uncle), or even ‘*lolo!*’ (grandfather) from around the circle. It should be pointed out here that this is more subversive than it might initially seem, as *kuya* and *ate* (meaning elder brother/sister) operate within the wider age ranking system as a title conferred by younger people to *all* older males and females respectively. Alongside the particle ‘*po*’, which is suffixed by younger individuals in conversations with the old, these terms are the most frequent linguistic reminders of the presence of age ranking.

So while the classification of sibling relations in many ways emphasised age hierarchy and the (previously mentioned) large sizes of families in Batangas meant that lateral kin covered a very wide age range, the space of the *barkada* so de-emphasised classificatory kin-based expressions of relatedness it was sometimes (in unfamiliar groupings) very difficult for me to establish who was related to who and in what way, or even tell who was older. In this way, *barkada* represented an inclusive and desirable environment for social interaction that in many ways operated to disguise and subvert differences in age, status, and economic power within the group. Play with the generational politics across age rankings such as this exemplifies how age and generation provided obstacles to conceptions of social inclusion in friendship relations, but that they were surmountable.

The emphasis people placed on the *barkada* and friendship as a model form of social relation, and perhaps even one which takes precedence over more classificatory forms of

reckoning who is one's kin, justifies an attempt to fit the my data on friendships in Batangas into the wider anthropology of friendship. "Friendship", as Robert Paine (1969:505) writes, "is probably just as important as kinship", but, he laments, "we dwell at length upon kinship but have much less to say about friendship". Others have argued that where it is considered, it is too often in terms of its relationship to kinship (Papataxiarchis 1991:175; Reed-Danahay 1999: 152).

The anthropology of friendship has attempted to rectify this partly through conceptual positioning of 'friendship' outside of and even opposed to other, more formal, networks of relations; be these economic, political, kin or of any other kind (Paine 1969: 508; Pitt-Rivers 1973: 96). Friendship's structural *opposition* to kinship, rather than just its separation from it, has also been considered (Uhl 1991; Santos 2008). Evthymios Papataxiarchis's (1991) analysis of adult male friendships on the Greek island of Mouria positions friendships as a form of release or haven from the demands of obligations manifested in kinship relations. Describing friendship amongst males as the "anti-structure" (1991: 156) of Mourani society, Papataxiarchis is explicit in his and his informants' understanding of their friend relations as representative of the emotion '*kefi*': emotional sentiment that stands opposite to 'jural' obligation in kinship or economic relations (1991: 171). Men's emotional relationships are often with "friends of the heart" (1991:156); male non-kin relations that go beyond reciprocity, and that filial kin relations (seen as the domain in which women are more prominent by his male informants) are actually closer to 'exchange' relationships (1991:177-178).

Papataxiarchis's position is interesting to consider in respect to McKinnon & Cannell's (2013; see chapter 4) interventions into the ideological division of domains of kinship and economy in modernity. While Papataxiarchis demonstrates the synthesis of the kinship and economic domains through the architectures of final exchange and obligation, his 'purification' of economic interactions from the domain of friendship upholds the relevance of McKinnon & Cannell's critique. The impetus to establish a 'field' of friendship studies runs the risk of isolating itself from its connectedness to the rest of social life, especially kinship. In Amit Desai's work on friendship in India, differences between people,

including kin, are overcome through ritual friendship in that the rite is “affirming [of] the social body of the village by connecting people across caste, kin and class lines and thereby emphasising a fundamental affinity as members of a common humanity localised in a particular space” (2010: 131). In this sense, it is unhelpful to view *barkada* as a social phenomenon excluded from kinship (or vice versa), as it exerts a great deal of influence over how people reckon their own relatedness. It was not, however, entirely supplementary to reckonings of kinship in Batangas and, as I discuss in the next section, the *barkada* as a social form retains the capability to produce reconfigurations of kin and political organisation.

Tambay, Youth and Generations

Students’ understanding of *tambay* as opposed to and more desirable than *tulong*, and its implicit hierarchy, of course has implications for political organisation. The possibilities for considering *tambay* as ‘anti-structural’ are clear, and were sometimes reflected on by students comparing the satisfaction of *barkada* relations with oppressive and trying relations with kin. *Tambay* was viewed as dangerous in a wider sense too, as characteristic of a volatile youth. In discussions of the behaviour and activities of youth, *tambay* was somewhat loaded, as it was often used to refer to unproductive, wasteful, and lazy uses of time by young people, and thus contributed to a moral framing of youth within narratives of social change, modernity and secularisation. Outside of shops and houses where children had set up home-made basketball hoops or, in Santa Clara, youths had congregated in large groups to sit astride their motorcycles and chat, proprietors and residents often stuck up signs sternly stating that “*bawal ang tambay dito!*” (Hanging out here is forbidden!).

There is a historical precedent for such concern over the disruptive capacity of friendship relations within a context of hierarchical debt. As noted above, *barkada*’s initial usage was pejorative, and was intended to bring to mind agitation, criminality and immorality. However, the usage also came to reference anti-colonial sentiment, rebellion and, importantly, separation from existing relationships of indebted labour and patronage that characterised the agricultural economy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus,

summarising the historical effects of the *barkada*, Dumont writes: “Its enormous success as a form largely derives from its versatility. In short, it is a social form that is largely indifferent to its cultural content. In other words, when seen in historical perspective, the *barkada* almost seems to dissolve into the plurality of its components ... Part of its cultural appeal resides in its polysemy. It irrupts on the Philippine scene at a given concrete moment as a convenient tag for the rebellion of youth” (1993: 432).

But, as I have shown through the material in the previous section, *barkada* exists as an everyday means of reckoning kinship *in tandem with* formal rules of hierarchy and debt. Though premised on very different ideas about the nature of relations between people, and particularly between children and adults, *barkada* and idioms such as *utang na loob* are both contemporaneous and co-resident in particular relations: *barkada* both borrows from and suspends formal kinship. *Tambay* between similarly aged teenagers offered a particular kind of conviviality, distinct from that experienced by a reunion of middle-aged classmates, or a drinking circle with trike drivers. But when age-bands were combined within the *barkada*, the same collective affect was deployed to plot the limits of and offer reminders of the possibility for subverting the normative structures of age hierarchy, *utang na loob*, and other elements of the SIR (Smooth Interpersonal Relations; see chapter 4) models of Philippine kinship and politics.

The temptation to normalise SIR must be resisted to demonstrate the capacity for these reconfigurations of kinship and power to occur within and through the existing ideologies. Reynaldo Ileto’s history of nineteenth-century peasant political movements ingeniously demonstrates how the ‘equilibrium’ of Philippine society is not dynamic only when unbalanced by unpredictable or external disruption, rather that instances of mass movements and populist revolutions in fact constitute part of the political system itself, which has the capacity to periodically remake itself: “folk religious practices and such cultural values as *utang na loob* and ‘*hiya*’ (shame), which usually promote passivity and reconciliation rather than conflict, have latent meanings that can be revolutionary. The possibility emerges only by regarding popular movements not as aberrations, but occasions in which hidden or unarticulated features of society reveal themselves” (1979: 10).

This interplay of apparently aberrant social forms and the limits of legitimate kinship is comparable to that shown in Perveen Mody's ethnographic study of marriages conducted in a district court in Delhi. Mody examines the changing legal status and morality of 'love marriages' (i.e. those between castes and 'communities') and dynamics of 'making kin' across divides between affines that go with them. Taking as her starting point the observation that anthropologies of kinship in India frequently note the prevalence of love marriage and its potential for changing formations of kinship, but that "love marriages are only ever considered to be between renegades who are transgressing 'the community as monolith'", Mody looks at how the incorporations of love marriages into state institutions such as marriage law and notes not only "how law becomes integrated into social relations" but also that "the law ... has had a significant effect on enlarging the sphere of legitimacy for certain relationships" (2008: 1, 10). Mody traces how the use of legal instrumentalism in 'intimate' domains since the 'Special Marriage Act' in 1872 amended the boundaries of what is considered legitimate kinship in order to accommodate social change, and crucially keep it within the purview of governance (2002: 235-236).⁶⁹

But what is the significance of *barkada's* resonance as a particularly *youthful* social form? The moral and political terrain on which ideologies of youth are contested and which young people occupy has been introduced earlier in this and the previous chapter. The relationship I established between *kabataan* as a category and a potentially transgressive politics is also seen in the history of youth public politics in the Philippines, which begins with university campus-based protest movements against the Marcos administration in the early 1960s, and in many ways progressed in response to the creeping dictatorship and increasing police violence of Marcos's rule (Rafael 2000: 152-161). Vicente Rafael considers youth political activism (both reformist moderate and radical communist) in this period to be the principal organ of political opposition, existing as it did outside of the control of 'spectacular' elite factionalism: "youth politics of this time was the shifting boundary against which dominant political conventions, particularly those pertaining to patronage, were constrained to reassert if not reconfigure themselves" (*ibid.*: 154-155).⁷⁰

Rafael also notes that while youth is an ambiguous category in the Philippines, this is certainly not a unique feature (*ibid*: 152). In ‘*Generations and Globalisation*’ (2007), Jennifer Cole and Deborah Durham, suggest the special relevance of ‘youth’ in modernity as both a category of historical commentary and an age group with unique orientations towards the future within globalisation and the expansion of capitalist penetration. They invoke the work of Karl Mannheim on generations (1936) to stress dynamics of intergenerational exchange and reproduction, and critique other forays by sociologists into the study of youth in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g. Erikson 1968; Eisenstadt 1956), which employed structural functionalist analysis to argue for the importance of youth as a liminal, formative stage in industrial capitalism (Cole & Durham 2007: 15-18). Rather than being a universal and deterministic stage in the life course, however, the authors argue that “age mediates the biological and the social, providing a powerful symbolic and practical terrain for marking and naturalising relations of hierarchy and dependency, difference and sameness, as well as patterns of temporality” (2007: 13).

Conclusion

In this - and the previous - chapter, I have also shown that representations of young peoples’ hierarchical relations of patronage and indebtedness with adults, and their more egalitarian relations with each other within the context of the *barkada*, are both subject to ideologies of legitimacy and moral sanction that shape the affective content of the relations. The same ideologies also define how persons are themselves valued, and these chapters have displayed in particular the wide-ranging significations and values allocated to children. Alongside the manifestation of the economic aspects of relatedness in unequal relations between children and adults discussed above, the ways in which a corresponding metaphorical space was opened up in the *barkada* suggests a more intriguing conclusion. The *barkada* and the communal acts of *matambay* that constituted it invite comparison with anthropological descriptions of friendship as ‘anti-structural’. However, as in Desai’s (2010) case, an analytic *opposition* between friendship and kinship overlooks how the kinds of relations they produce ‘borrow’ elements of emotive and ideological content from each other. A more complete sense of both kinship and friendship relations is achieved if it is recognised that the egalitarian and affective aspects of the rela-

tionships in the *barkada* are latent within the same systems as constitute kinship relations, but are activated differently between people and at different times.

In the light of Cole & Durham's theoretical intervention, the *barkada* can thus be read as the source for potential transformations of kinship and politics not only because of its creation of a space in which hierarchy is suspended, but also because it is an environment in which the obviousness of temporality - trajectories of relationships across time, age rankings, the reproduction of institutions across history - is obscured. This framing captures how the specific histories and contemporary saliences of 'youth' in the Philippines exert specific effects on the social forms, such as the *barkada*, in which the more general conditions of youth in modernity - futurity, transformation, hope, regeneration - are expressed.

In the next two chapters, I move my attention onto the students at the International Science Academy; a demographic that were usually older and thus considered themselves more embedded within the trajectories that might lead them into working overseas. For them the aforementioned conditions of youth in modernity were felt more keenly, and in the remaining chapters I explore the exact means through which their exposure to them manifested.

Chapter 6

Desirable Vocations:

Labour migration, sexuality/gender and 'tourate' production

Introduction

Tourism is sometimes an unsettling subject matter for anthropologists, and its study is often characterised by a degree of boundary beating by ethnographers. Indeed, as so-called 'cultural' and 'ethnic tourism' have become more popular, and ethical tourism movements purport to occupy anthropological niches such as advocacy, mediation and education, the boundaries are becoming harder to beat. Part of the anthropological response to the increasing proximity of ethnographic fieldwork and cultural tourism has been to, in a sense, demystify touristic practice. By this I mean contextualising the practices and ideologies that are culturally articulated by and through tourism and demonstrating their relation with and dependence upon other social fields.

This chapter attempts such demystification by considering prospective workers within the Philippine tourism industry in relation to overseas migrant labour, as perceived by students and teachers at the International Science Academy (ISA). To do this I looked at how they articulated their expectations of these different fields of work within the environment of the college, but also consider the routes by which the students came to consider themselves as valuable kinds of worker. In particular, I consider the relationship between sexuality, gender and desirability in these two fields.

Throughout this chapter, I rely on terminology from Sally Ann Ness's ethnography of tourism in Davao City, *Where Asia Smiles*, which I explain briefly here. First, Ness characterises the kind of spaces that tourism in modernity produces and requires as 'utopics' (c.f. Marin 1984; Causey 1997): "Too perfect to actually exist in their truest forms, utopic spaces are by definition 'nowhere' places, realms that in their ultimate, absolutely ideal manifestations can have their being only in imaginary spaces, in realms of possibility ... The worlds in which they can be conceived and finally, totally, and com-

pletely fulfilled, are extraordinary, supernatural, meta-functional places, upgraded, reformed, refined, and emended worlds of dreams, hopes, desires, plans, and fantasies” (Ness 2003: 12). As I want to consider how ISA students negotiate and position themselves as prospective workers within the utopics of the tourism industry, it is of interest that Ness also notes that the position of labour within utopic spaces can be problematic: “Tourists enter utopic worlds where ... they are not supposed to work in the industrial or post-industrial sense ... [I]n some of the more exoticised, primitively coded touristic landscapes, [tourists] explore worlds where they believe no one works in such a sense. They play in touristic landscapes with the possibility of worklessness” (*ibid*: 13)

The strength of Ness’s contribution to the anthropology of tourism is to focus upon what she calls the ‘tourate’, defined as a place’s “population of tourism service providers and ‘locals’” (Ness 2003: xi) but also, following Andrew Causey, from who she borrows the term, as an identifier for “the individuals at any given tourist destination who interact with tourists or tourism” (*ibid*: 251; c.f. Causey 1997: 34). She develops this concept to describe the continuation of the means of tourism beyond the presence of and encounters with actual tourists. These means are “the blatantly unnatural construction and production of scenic destinations ... creating colossal stages, or realms of narration and representation” (2003: 15). As is implied by the synthesis of these definitions, people are invariably part of the tourate, and are constructed and produced to be part of a destination. Pursuing an approach that focusses on the tourate, I want to demonstrate that schooling at ISA can be considered as a technology of ‘tourate production’, and explore tourism’s intersections with practices of schooling and their orientations towards labour.

International Science Academy and ‘Tourate Production’

In the introduction, I mentioned how almost everyone in Palaw and Santa Clara would link schooling to work in an explicit sense, in that the primary aim in attaining education and attending school is as part of a predicted trajectory from schooling, to wage-labour, to eventual material prosperity. The evidence indicates that they were correct in this view, at least in terms of working abroad, as ‘education’ is still connected to international labour migration in terms of actual attainment of qualifications: most Filipino migrants have

completed secondary school education and around 40% continued into tertiary education (Orbeta & Abrigo 2009: 10).

The first step into paid employment could not be accomplished without having completed high school, however, and this element often went without saying: if one does not get an education, then the economic safety offered by a secure job will be perpetually out of reach. The expression of this pathway varied, depending on individual students' circumstance. While some students emphasised personal or individualistic goals as the motivation behind going to school, such as "*mayroon akong maipagmamalaki sa aking sarili*" (to have pride in myself) or "*para yumaman pagdating ng araw*" (for a wealthy future), other emphasised responsibility to others, especially parents and younger siblings.

Despite this insistence on the importance of secondary schooling, almost every student I knew was convinced that higher education was the bare minimum for this projected life course. Merely avoiding the economic lowest rungs was not suitable reward for educational endeavour on the part of the student, and investment on the part of their families. The 'end-game' of schooling was agreed upon as obtaining a particular class of job, and becoming a particular class of worker, both of which might most succinctly be described as 'uniformed'. These jobs are short-term contracted, located in urban centres or peri-urban areas, preferably within a large or widespread business. While mostly white-collar, jobs considered to hold similar esteem also included service sector jobs in the restaurant, hotel and tourism industries. When students and teachers would discuss the merits of schooling in terms of getting a job, it is this kind of job they would be implicitly referring to.

An example of a young man who had been successful in finding this kind of work was Edwin. I first met Edwin when he was 18 years old, and studying a two-year course in hotel and restaurant service. His motivation in studying came from his desire to work abroad, and he was confident of his chances in finding employment overseas through his connection to an aunt who was resident in Singapore. Edwin had graduated from high

school in Palaw, but despite having good grades was unable to afford the fees to enter a vocational college. Instead he got a job in McDonald's⁷¹ in Santa Clara, and saved money to be able to enter college. During my fieldwork in Batangas, he was unusual in that he managed to keep his job at the restaurant even whilst studying, as the staff turnover there was well known to be very high, and competition for jobs fierce.

Edwin emphasised to me the commonalities between the requirements of his job at McDonald's, and those of his studies at the college. Qualities such as '*kaeksaktuhan*' (punctuality or precision) and '*propesyonalismo*' (professionalism) carried currency across both parts of his life. I have little doubt that the fact that he worked at McDonald's benefitted him in his service course, given the emphasis on customer interactions, English language, and presentation required at both institutions. He and his family maintained that the potential for him finding work in Singapore was high, having spent so long accumulating experience in an environment that reinforced practices that displayed an aspirational identity.

The kind of modern, middle-class, urbane attributes associated with uniformed work were precisely those that the ISA attempted to foster and project. The ISA in Santa Clara was a branch of a large chain of tertiary-level vocational colleges established in the early 1980s. Originally founded in Manila as a computing and IT training centre, at the time of my fieldwork the ISA was a highly recognisable brand in Batangas, with over 200 branches in almost all major cities in the Philippines and a habit of painting their buildings the distinctive bright yellow and blue of their livery. ISA Santa Clara, founded in 1998 and now educating about 1,000 students, was housed inside three two-storey buildings comprising a 'business centre' on one of the busy roads into the centre of the town. Painted bright yellow and sporting the ISA logo prominently on a sign out on the street, it rose above its neighbouring small businesses and was identifiable from a distance. Tall trees shaded the outside courtyards where students and teachers congregated between classes and parked their motorcycles, and the whole site was surrounded by a tall wall and segregated from the street by two large gates at which armed guards were posted.

Unlike much of the surrounding town, the campus was seldom noisy or dirty from the fumes of *jeepneys*, and was kept relatively shady, clean and cool. The aesthetic of the campus - its cleanliness and distinction from its small town surroundings - was cultivated to match what it claimed to offer to its graduates: mobile, educated professionalism removed from the surroundings of rural Batangas, but also an emulation of modern university campuses in Manila, or even Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore. The college director, Herman, explained to me the aspirational politics of the college, and its position and status within the landscape of educational institutions and practices in Santa Clara and beyond. Herman was in his forties and came from a wealthy family from Manila, the son of a lawyer and university teacher, and had pursued a number of careers and entrepreneurial projects, including an attempt to migrate to Canada in 1987, before taking over the ISA college. Early on in my fieldwork, Herman explained how he saw the ISA as a proxy for more prestigious schools:

H: “So many of our students here think that they cannot apply to UP [University of the Philippines] or Ateneo [de Manila], or UST [University of Santo Tomas]. My daughter [now principal at the ISA Santa Clara] was at UP , but lots of the students here, they can’t attend a school in Manila, that kind of school. So we try to make ISA here like a UP in the provinces. We even have many students who ... they come from Batangas, and go to Manila, but then they have come back.”

CM: “Because they drop out?”

H: “Yes, because they drop out, and then they come to study with us instead.”

This comparison was maintained through the emphasis in the college’s advertising and public representation to parents and students of its similarities in ethics, modernism and relevance, as compared to other ‘provincial’ colleges. Students regularly claimed that a difference between ISA and other tertiary-level institutions in Batangas province was the progressive attitude it held towards its students. Greater freedoms were given to students, such as greater flexibility of class hours, a limit on oppressive campus or dormitory curfews,⁷² and encouragement to seek employment during study. Finally, gay students and teachers often favourably compared the open-minded attitude of the school to other col-

leges (especially the Catholic institutions), where open declarations of sexuality (especially by teachers) could be highly problematic. In my experience, however, sexual tolerance at ISA was neither universal nor uncontested, an area I return to below.

A further way in which the comparison to universities in Manila was achieved at ISA was through modernist aesthetics that differentiated the college from its rural surroundings and from the older Church-sponsored Catholic schools in the town. This was reflected in Herman's project for the construction of a secondary school on the ISA site. When I arrived in Santa Clara, construction had just begun on a fourth building on campus for this purpose; a much larger three-storey block of classrooms which would cater for a several hundred more students. The ambitious project had not exactly taken off by the time I completed my fieldwork, as although the building was completed in time for the start of the 2013 school year, only ten students had enrolled so far. Herman was still optimistic, however, that his model for a distinct kind of private secondary school would eventually succeed.

Rather than necessarily focusing on how teaching would be better, Herman emphasised how the secondary school's appearance and public presence would demonstrate its elite (or at least aspirant) credentials. This was achieved by sartorial, architectural and technological reference to repertoires of educational capital in both Manila and overseas. Perpetuating his idea of recreating elite universities in the provinces, the secondary school students should first mimic the 'look' of the Ateneo de Manila secondary school, an elite high school affiliated to the university of the same name. In practice this meant students wearing traditional school uniforms including knee socks and plaid skirts for the girls, and long-sleeved shirts for the boys; a style that Herman insisted was 'British'. Also taken with the notion that students in the South Korean schooling system (a frequently referenced model of high quality education) used computers to do all their schoolwork, Herman was insisting that every secondary school student would be issued with a high-tech tablet computer, an image that - even before the computers had been bought - was displayed prominently on advertising posters around town.

Although the aspiration to an elite, *Manileño* cosmopolitanism informed the educational and aesthetic environments of the ISA Santa Clara, explicit accounts of the aspirational purpose of an ISA education tended to look overseas. ISA institutions presented themselves as offering educations specifically designed to make their graduates employable in professional jobs, and had historically been highly flexible in the courses that they offered in order to respond to perceived gaps in skilled and semi-skilled labour supply. Increasingly, the gaps identified by ISA were in labour markets overseas, and as such, many students enrolled at the college to study courses that they and the college believed would lead to skills and training for which there was demand outside of the Philippines.

ISA was not unusual in its explicit affiliation between the completion of its courses and successful application to jobs overseas - a number of other similar colleges made such claims and also provided courses which matched up to perceived gaps in the international labour market. However, few marketed their claimed ability to send students to jobs abroad quite so vibrantly and directly, and made much of their usage of TESDA (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) courses, a selection of tertiary-level programmes using curricula produced by the government to bring professional qualifications in the Philippines up to 'international standard'.

A notable example of ISA's flexibility in the market - and its eye for trends in overseas labour migration - occurred during the boom in nursing degree enrolment in the 1990s. As countries in Southwest Asia, Europe and North America experienced increasing shortfalls in workers qualified in nursing (and in less skilled caring professions such as health-care assistants and social carers), nursing degrees in the Philippines became more popular as a perceived guarantee of lucrative work overseas. ISA capitalised upon the demand for nursing qualifications by bringing in teachers from established universities and creating new two- and four-year nursing courses, which were particularly popular in the northern provinces of Luzon such as Ilocos (Ortiga 2014). However, as immigration controls in the prospective host countries became tighter throughout the 2000s, nursing degrees fell in popularity, and ISA simply abandoned a number of its programs, so that now hardly any of the ISA colleges offer any nursing training.

While the ISA network as a whole offered an extremely varied range of professional training courses, teachers at the Santa Clara branch actually taught a relatively narrow range of subjects. The available courses centred around two disciplines: computing, with bachelors of science available in computer science, information technology, computer engineering, computer and consumer electronics, and multimedia arts; and hospitality, with courses in tourism management, hotel and restaurant management, and hospitality and restaurant services. Programs in secondary education (teacher training), business management, and office administration were also offered. With the exception of the BSEd, which usually would lead to work in secondary schools in the Philippines, teachers and students all considered that obtaining a degree from ISA would undoubtedly increase one's chance of getting a job and, more importantly, make one far more employable overseas. Though I attended the classes for and talked to students studying the full range of offered courses, the only classes that I consider in depth in this chapter were parts of the Hotel and Restaurant Management (HRM), Tourism Management, and Hospitality and Restaurant Service (HRS) programs, as it was in these classes that the curriculum continued to most explicitly focus on the placement of graduates in jobs overseas, and within the 'tourate'.

Hospitality Training and 'OJT'

Class sizes for the HRM and HRS were some of the smallest in the school, around 15, as the resources and space needed to teach were scarcer than for other subjects. Classes took place in three specially designed classrooms: a kitchen, a restaurant and a hotel room. The kitchen was a large and well air-conditioned room with windows all around two sides, well equipped (to my inexperienced eye) with new and high quality appliances and utensils. Courses taught in the kitchen included areas of culinary training such as food hygiene, wine appreciation, Asian and Western cuisine, baking and pastry arts, and decorative fruit carving. During lessons, the students worked, often in pairs, at three rows of stainless steel cooking stations with sinks, ovens and worktops while wearing their chef whites. Mr Leonard, a teacher in his fifties and the hospitality courses director, would teach from his desk at the front of the classroom. Although the vast majority of kitchen lessons involved

cooking, some written or oral exercise work also took place in the kitchen, with the students stood at their stations.

Cooking lessons involved an examination of an enormous folder of laminated recipes, one of which Mr Leonard would choose, before a trip to the market to buy ingredients. Students did not have to demonstrate creativity in the cooking of dishes, instead being rewarded for more accurate recreations of the dish described in the recipe. Recipes not only covered dishes that students would be able to eat locally and cook at home, such as spring roll-like *lumpia* or *adobo* (vinegar and soy sauce) stew, but also staples of elite international cuisine such as chicken supreme, duck a l'orange, peach melba, and so on. Even the 'Asian' cuisine, due to the environment and standardisation of the preparation and presentation of food, meant that dishes students would eat at home were often cooked very differently so as to more closely fit what was termed an 'industry standard' in the curriculum.

Exact standards were expected in the preparation of the simulation hotel room and services practiced in the restaurant, too. The restaurant was an emulation of an Italian restaurant, with Italian ingredients and pictures of Rome, Venice and a Tuscan farmhouse decorating the walls. Lessons in waiting service required students to meet highly specific standards of appearance, focussed on the correct ways to wear the black and white HRS uniform but including policing of hair and make-up. As with the kitchen lessons, classes referred to a 'recipe book' of service procedures, including how to set a table, pour wine, the exact routine for serving a customer, and even offering special scripts for dealing with complaints. In the hotel room, making beds and arranging toiletries in the bathroom had similar sections of the manual devoted to them, including exact diagrams of how to fold bed sheets.

ISA's hospitality training courses were thus designed to equip students for work in hotels, bars, restaurants, and tourist resorts, or even as flight attendants. Almost all students in the course were confident that their training would qualify them for work as a chef, bartender or waiter in a resort hotel, a tour guide for a Manila-based agency, or other semi-

skilled work in the service and catering sector. For many students studying HRM and HRS, work in Manila, especially for an agency with ties overseas, would lead to more lucrative work abroad. Noleen, a 2013 graduate in the 2-year HRS course, had secured interviews with a catering company who employed staff in the Dubai and Kuala Lumpur as well as the Philippines. Although she was keen on working overseas, her attitude towards the necessary pre-requisites for doing so was typical of ISA students:

N: *“Kapag matrabaho ako sa Maynila, sa restawran sa Maynila, madadala ako ng experience ng mag-weyter. Kasi, kung wala akong experience, walang trabaho nasa abroad. Kapag na-email ako ang restawran sa Singapore, sabi nila ‘kailangan mo experience muna!’”* (If I work in Manila, at a restaurant in Manila, I will gain experience of being a waiter. Because, if I don’t have experience, there is no work abroad. When I emailed the restaurant in Singapore, they said, ‘you need experience first!’)

The flow of students into work in the Philippines service sector as a means to end of working overseas was not because of a failure of the ISA to live up to the promises of its advertisements. Rather, this was seen as a structured and attractive aspect of the kind of education they offered. As mentioned above, many students worked during their courses, often to provide income to support their continuing education, but also as part of that education itself. While the ability to seek work gave students satisfaction as it reflected their feelings of self-sufficiency and maturity, the principal reason the college encouraged them was that it complemented their claimed unique selling point: its ‘on the job training’ (OJT) scheme. This program placed graduating students in workplaces for up to two months to gain experience in the sector their course trained them for. Completing a certain number of hours was necessary for achieving graduation. While some students had simply earned their OJT ‘working credits’ on the jobs they held during the rest of their course, many students took advantage of the ISA’s influence and industry connections to gain unpaid placements at other, often more prestigious, workplaces.

The most extravagant and popular work placement available to students was an opportunity to work on board a ship. While seafarers working in haulage, ship management and engineering comprise an relatively high proportion of overseas workers from the Philippines, to the extent that they dominant certain on-board professions worldwide (McKay, S.C. 2007: 617-618), fewer work in the tourism side of international shipping. Despite this, and as I discuss in the next section, Filipinos' reputations amongst international employers as particularly adept and caring service workers (partly reinforced by state policy) make them popular employees in the sector (Wood 2000: 359). The ship I joined the HRM and HRS students on operated as a ferry between Manila and Cagayan de Oro - a city three days sail away on Mindanao. The facilities on board included cabins for passengers and a number of restaurants. Students rotated through a number of different work placements on board, including being a porter in the ship's kitchens, working 'front of house' on the reception desk, serving food in the restaurant, cleaning cabins, making beds, and performing other maintenance work.

The jobs working directly with customers or in the glamorous environments of the restaurants were understandably far more popular, though students' responses to the work they did were fairly cynical. Many worked in similar kinds of roles in their jobs in Batangas, in offices or in restaurants, and so were dismissive about how many genuinely new skills they had actually learned on board the ship. By contrast, the elements of the training that they found most interesting were the more intellectual engagements they were required to make by the ship's training staff with the concept of the Philippine tourism industry as a whole, and work as a 'seafarer' in particular. Both the ISA curriculum and the ferry company promoted the idea that Filipinos have a 'natural propensity' for seafaring, a piece of rhetoric that has been extensively examined in the work of Olivia Swift (2007, 2011) and Steven McKay (2007), who note the preponderance of Filipino crew in commercial shipping, encouraged by state projects since the 1970s (alongside other labour export policies). This is just one example of the specialisation of labour export from the Philippines informed by an essentialist narrative: in the next section I describe how other forms of essentialism, especially regarding gender and sexuality, were deployed by the ISA, but were also resonant with narratives promoted by the Philippine state.

'Gay-Paris Style', Sexuality/Gender and Class

Anthropologists studying labour migration from the Philippines have followed a school of migration studies that emphasises the gendering of global movements of people and capital, such as Nash & Fernandez (1983), Chant (1992), Momsen (1999), and Willis & Yeoh (2000). Indeed, the vast majority of ethnographic studies of Filipino experiences of labour migration, which began to appear in the 1990s, have investigated the experiences of women,⁷³ a common trend in these studies being a focus upon domestic workers (Colen 1995; Barber 1997; Constable 1997; Chell 2000; Parreñas 2001b, 2008; Cheng 2006; Zontini 2010). The reasons for the female dominance of labour migrations from the Philippines, and for the channelling of these workers into professions of care and service, may be to do with the structure of global labour migrations generally (Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2003), but it is also necessary to consider processes and structural forces specific to the Philippines.

Studies of the domestic production of Philippine migrant labour also emphasise the ideological work of gender. Accounts of the Philippine state 'marketing' the 'productive femininity' of Filipino care workers, both male and female, to international employers and other nation-states, and 'training' female migrants in POEA facilities by rigorously policing racialised 'feminine' attributes reflect the centrality of gender and sexuality to the state's - and the market's - perception of the value of Filipino workers (Guevara 2010: 125; Rodriguez 2010: 52, 93). Overseas, Nicole Constable's ethnography of female Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong demonstrates how 'naturalised' assumptions about their capacity for such work rest on employers' prejudices about Filipinos as stereotypically docile (1997: 38-39). The extent of the Philippines' economic dependence on these kinds of labour, and thus the ideologies that support them, even invites analysis that frames the Philippines' international relation in terms of particular kinds of sexual subservience (Tadiar 2004). Of interest to the present discussion are the means by which idioms of femininity, masculinity and sexuality were put into play at ISA in the training of HRS and HRM graduates, and especially the status and roles of gay students.⁷⁴

At ISA, students and teachers would often offer a distinction between what they saw as male and female kinds of work, and these views were reproduced demographically by the gendering of particular courses: for instance, there was only one female computing engineer, and all but one of the office management students - those training for secretarial work - were women. During the OJT scheme on the ferry, while work experience was considered useful for both male and female students, material and propaganda promoting the possibilities of 'seafaring' careers (a diffuse class of jobs, covering pilot, engineer, mechanical technician, janitorial staff, and more) were directed directly at the male students.⁷⁵ Anthropological material on seafarers from the Philippines have shown how industry promotion attached explicitly masculine ideals of heroism and nationalistic fraternity to seafaring work (McKay, S.C. 2007: 623-626), and some commercial ships have become environments in which particular forms of *barkada*, as discussed in chapter 5, could flourish amongst all-male groups (Swift 2011: 280).

However, the position of gay students at the school was indicative of a more complicated articulation between sexuality/gender and labour. While they superficially occupied positions of gendered labour that corresponded to stereotypes of their sexuality (i.e. the one male office management student was, in fact, gay), the ways in which gay students occupied gendered roles in the HRM and HRS courses was more complex. Hospitality and service was not an explicitly gendered profession for the students, in that the HRM and HRS cohorts were evenly split between male and female. The complexity arose from that fact that the teachers and many students subscribed to the idea that good performance in these jobs was connected to practices associated with '*bakla*' identity. In other words, to be a good waiter or tour operator, whether male or female, you needed to perform as or adopt some practices of a *bakla*. The specifics of this view became clear to me throughout the HRS classes I attended. The correct forms of service being referred to, often called '*gay-Paris style*', involved a degree of flamboyancy in bodily movement: over-exaggerated flourishes of arms when serving and speaking, always-exuberant facial expression, an accommodating and submissive bodily position in relation to the customer.

Speech style resembling cosmopolitan *sward*-speak was also highlighted as desirable, and so students were encouraged to adopt the singsong intonations of English spoken as part of urban *bakla* slang dialects. Indeed, the supposedly advanced capabilities of *bakla* to speak English reinforced conceptions of their suitability and competence in tourism services. Finally, the care and creativity over personal appearance and grooming that *bakla* were commended for was supposed to serve as an example to students of the levels desired in the tourism and service industry. Even though gay students often customised or amended uniforms to offer a tighter or more revealing fit, and were constantly getting in trouble for it, their *approach* to appearances, especially their shrewdness and creativity with dress, were often called upon as exemplary. The way these performance styles were referred to and used corresponds with Martin Manalansan's description of 'baklaness' existing as an effect of external forces, rather than an essential identity:

"Some informants suggested that the *bakla*'s body is not his own. An informant from Quezon province, in the southwestern part of Luzon, told me that another euphemism for *bakla* in his hometown was '*manyika ng Panginoon*' (doll of God). While the drag paraphernalia forms the outer shell of the *bakla*, his physical self is the plaything of God ... This notion can actually explain how *bakla* can also be used as a verb. *Nababakla* can loosely be translated as 'baklaness' happening or descending on somebody as opposed to *nagiging bakla*, that is, 'becoming bakla'. The first verb actually suggests that *bakla* can also be an essence that can be transferred to or can descend upon a person like a trance or a fever. Thus, in some aspects, *bakla* behaviour is seen to be not a product of something inside a person, but rather as a product of an outside force or forces."

(Manalansan 2003: 43)

The HRS and HRM students can be thought of as, in these instances, '*nababakla*' (becoming/doing *bakla*). As was discussed in chapter 3, this mode of emulation has particular significances in the Philippines, and reflects a moment where students attempt to undergo a transformation into a proficient '*gay-Paris style*' service worker.

It should be noted that these emphases on bodily comportment and discipline, while important attributes of secondary and primary schooling in the Philippines, were surprisingly prominent even at tertiary level in the education of older students. It was normal, even for institutions for mature students and professionals, to demand a uniform of some kind and to incorporate some kind of rote physical exercise into their schooling techniques. During classes, Mr Leonard's assessment of the success of a student's learning often came down their ability to exactly emulate particular body movements, whether these be practical acts such as tool use - cutting an onion a particular way, placing a plate on the table smoothly - or more diffuse educational outcomes such as punctuality or attentiveness. In one class he was assessing a student in bar tending, and paused the process to say to me, "Chris, how do you know if a waitress is a good waitress?" then, placing one hand on her shoulder and another on the small of her back and straightening her posture to make her more upright, said "when she is standing straight: then, she is paying attention to the customer!"

In this educational environment, *bakla* movements and identity represented an accessible repertoire of bodily disciplines for teachers to call upon that students could recognise and commodify by incorporating into their own service practices. Despite this, the kind of *bakla* identity being referred to in HRS classes was also understood to be a cartoonish representation that did not seek to accurately portray the way in which gay individuals or *bakla* actually behaved in everyday life. It is worth considering at this point in what ways *bakla* identity differed from other sexualities in Batangas. To illustrate the distinctions, I will briefly describe the identification of one of the gay high school teachers, Mr Rey.

Mr Rey, despite being in his late twenties, was unmarried, and lived alone in a house next door to the other teachers in the co-op subdivision. The teachers all loved to gossip about each others' love lives, and rumours abounded as to why Mr Rey had not found a wife, and although the consensus was that he was gay he had courted a number of women in the past. Mr Rey was also often complemented as dressing well (he always wore sunglasses), and having a cool (*hanep*) and aloof attitude. The explanation from Mr Daniel - an openly gay teacher at the high school who participated in the *bakla* community in the

town - was that he was not '*sobrang gay*' (very gay), like a *bakla*, but instead was "*ku-lang gay - mukhang lalaki pa siya*" (less gay - he still looks like a man).

The significance of this distinction - and Mr Rey's lifestyle as a bachelor living alone in the subdivision - is that it is as much a comment upon class and social identity as it is upon gender and sexuality. Martin Manalansan has shown that for the Filipino gay diaspora in New York, the internationalised discourse of gay rights feels like unfamiliar territory, in which practices purported to demonstrate pride in a homosexual identity are experienced instead as exposing and shaming (2003: 32). This mistranslation spurs Manalansan to articulate the ways in which 'gay' and '*bakla*' identity have intersected and often been opposed to one another along moral, class, and political lines across a number of works from the Philippines (*ibid*: 35-41). In many of these readings, gay identity is valorised over *bakla* (Tan 1995; Fleras 1997) as the more modern, politically serious and middle-class evolution of the gaudy, working-class *bakla*.

The differentiation Mr Daniel made between '*gay*' and '*sobrang gay*' followed some of the same logics of distinction, though *bakla* in Palaw and Santa Clara were never thought to be in some way unfavourable to someone who identified as *gay*. On the contrary, the lack of clarity in 'still looking like a man' made *gay* identity in some ways problematic, though I will return to this in chapter 6. For most people, the difference between *gay* and *bakla* was a distinct material and bodily culture. *Bakla* were said to have a '*pusong babae*' (heart of a woman) but the body of a man, and so would amend their body to match the heart to varying degrees at different times. As such, *bakla* may wear men's clothing on a occasion, but will have their hair styled to look feminine, wear make-up and affect particular bodily styles of walking and talking. By contrast *gay* identity in the Philippines has often been conceived of as antithetical to elements of *bakla* style, in some ways a reserved and un-flamboyant - and undoubtedly urban - contrivance. Micheal L. Tan, cited in Manalansan's work, explicitly identifies *gay* identity with Metro Manila and, more importantly, with a kind of professional worker and lifestyle that is distinctly urban: "[t]his gay population remains partly in the shadows, socialising in gay establishments ...

but keeping its sexual orientation discreet at home and in their workplace” (1995: 87). In a small, gossip-ridden town in rural Batangas, such a separation might not be possible.

Mr Rey’s identity as urbane, discerning, individualistic, and salaried - in other words, middle-class - was complemented by his rejection of ‘traditional’ kinds of gay identity - being *bakla*. As such, Mr Rey’s ambiguous position as an unmarried bachelor, as opposed to being ‘out’ in an internationalised sense, avoided a conflict with or contradiction of the normative performance of sexuality/gender as *bakla*, but denied him some of the social, economic and performative niches available to *bakla*. Most of the gay students I knew at the ISA faced a similar predicament to Mr Rey. While they more closely identified with a metropolitan gay identity in keeping with the professionalism and modernity espoused as valuable by the college, the students were confronted with the expectation to become *bakla* in the classroom. Their aspirational gay identity was undermined by a dominant gender ideology.

It is important to recognise that the appropriation of *bakla* identity did not have particularly benign outcomes for gay students or, in the end, for Mr Leonard. While I knew far fewer gay women in the Philippines, the one student at ISA who did identify as lesbian experienced related problems with this gender ideology. She especially was vulnerable to ‘unfavourable’ comparisons to *bakla* performances, and was considered by her peers and teachers to possess masculine qualities that rendered her unsuitable for some service roles. There is considerable stigma attached to lesbianism in the Philippines, which is manifested variously through dismissal of its existence, to a lack conceptual terminologies to define it (Josef 2012).

The ‘*bakla*’ and gay male students also experienced problems: teachers and students often made dismissive and derogatory comments about gay (rather than *bakla*) students, in which their distinctions from the stereotypes being employed were emphasised. For instance, one student, commenting on a classmate in the HRS course, stated that “‘*di naman bading siya, may damit ng lalaki siya, at wala siyang maraming meykap*” (s/he’s not that gay, s/he has men’s clothes, and s/he doesn’t have lots of makeup). Despite the cre-

ation of these gaps between idealised performance and everyday expressions of sexuality/gender, gay students were often presented to the class by the teachers with the expectation that they would display or demonstrate all of the supposed aptitudes of *bakla*. Teachers also used the ‘beauty’ of gay students in jest to tease girls.

Gay students themselves would often rise to invitations to perform their ‘natural’ skills, and consequently enjoyed reputations as talented at the professions they were being prepared for. However, the open appropriation of *bakla* identity was at once complimentary and barbed. As notions of femininity and *bakla* sexuality/gender were bound up together in Batangas, it is possible to discern a connection between the projects of the Philippine state in feminising and domesticating how Filipino labour was perceived globally, and the projects of the ISA colleges in producing labour that corresponds to that perception. To expand on this point, I return to the idea of utopics, and my own experience of a what constituted a ‘tour’ according to the ISA teachers and students.

The Construction and Implosion of Utopics

When organising a day trip to celebrate a birthday or other social event, people in Palaw and Santa Clara would often head to one of the many ‘resorts’⁷⁶ established throughout the province. The position of my field site in western Batangas meant that I was living near some of the closest accessible countryside and beach-lined coast for inhabitants in several large cities, including Batangas City, Tagaytay, Calamba, and Dasmariñas. Palaw, despite its relatively banal agricultural environs, was home to a few resorts, containing *nipa*-style huts for rent around a swimming pool or restaurant.

Coastal resorts were far more common. These sites were packed in next to each other along the beaches, as the occupants of most coastal settlements near Santa Clara had given over any beach space they owned to the tourism industry. Coastal resorts consisted of a number of bamboo shacks (less often *nipa* huts) situated along a portion of beach that could be hired for a day, night, or even by the hour. Settlements themselves were also highly oriented towards tourists visiting the resorts, supporting large numbers of guest-houses, hotels, restaurants and so on. Running water and fire pits were usually available

in the resorts, but there were seldom any more amenities than this at the most basic sites. More ambitious or successful enterprises had built concrete houses and other accommodation in addition to the shacks, or had floated huts on pontoons out into the sea itself. Some even had water parks and restaurants of their own. Visitors to the resorts would often just spend time there, enjoying the sunshine and swimming in the sea, but more often day-trippers would bring fruit and meat to eat, and '*matagay*' (sit in a circle and share drink, usually brandy or beer, by passing around a glass).

'Resorts' like these were a destination for domestic visitors, not foreigners, who were expected to stay in the expensive air-conditioned hotels in the cities, or in the gated elite resorts elsewhere in the province. The facilities for tourism in Batangas were not starkly divided between two economic poles, however, with perhaps the majority of tourist infrastructure - tour guides, boat trips, restaurants, hotels - being aimed at middle-class visitors from the cities.⁷⁷ My particular interest in these kinds of facilities was triggered by my experience of a 'tour' arranged by a student from the International Science Academy (ISA) vocational college in Santa Clara. Edwin, the HRM student mentioned above, had to organise a day trip for a number of people to Tagaytay City, a nearby tourist trap in the mountains between Laguna and Batangas provinces for a part of his assessment. Tagaytay City was alluring for visitors thanks to its position on top of a ridge of mountains, which gave the city a relatively clement climate and impressive views out over Lake Taal, a volcanic crater filled with water. Additionally, the city was famous for its pineapple groves and for the mountaintop ruin of a Marcos-era mansion.

Edwin's tour was conducted with three other students in his course, and cost me 500PHP (approximately 7 GBP) for my ticket and a meal. The students, all wearing uniforms, had prepared a great deal of literature, livery and trinkets to promote their 'pretend' tour company, including advertising pamphlets, a banner to hang across the front of the minivan we would ride, and carved wooden key rings for the 'customers' to have as a memento. For the tour itself, two teachers from the college and some of the students' relatives joined us. Our trip took in all the sites in Tagaytay City (including a chance to take home some pineapples), as well as a visit to a large mall and a stop for lunch in one of the

mountaintop resorts: a forested hillside overlooking the lake, dotted with outdoor activities such as a rope swing, paddling pool, and playgrounds for children.

The guests' responses to the outing were positive, and many enjoyed the novelty of their younger relatives, the students, being tour guides. Though the touristic content of the tour was well received, the most popular stop was at a large mall on the way back into Batangas, the relative enthusiasm for which was a slight annoyance for Edwin, who led the group. This was partly because the teachers and students were more serious about the educational value of the tour, which, one teacher said, offered them '*imersyon sa trabaho ng tour-guide*' (immersion in the work of a tour-guide). The ISA's goal of strengthening the articulation between education and labour - in this case specifically the tourate - was accomplished. The consensus too was that the skills and experience that were being imparted were also transferable, and that 'tour-guiding' was a static professional category that easily translated into other tourates.

What the students had learned, then, on the 'pretend' tour of Tagaytay was a standardised set of skills related to producing - or reproducing - a consumable collection of cultural artefacts: the pineapples, the views of the lake, the key ring gift. I choose to consider these artefacts as fragments of a utopic; their inclusion within Edwin's tour displaces them somewhat from an imperfect reality, and encourages an imagination of a touristic destination characterised by a never-existent agricultural idyll.⁷⁸ My conclusion, however, is to suggest that Ness's utopics are not limited in their analytic and descriptive capacity to experiences of tourism. The ways in which training for both the tourism industry and other forms of transnational labour deployed sexuality/gender as a kind of educational capital, suggest that the kind of labourer the ISA was attempting to produce were, in a sense, utopic.

Conclusion

ISA schooling's appropriation and usage of *bakla* body discipline was designed to encourage workers for the tourism industry to behave in a stylised manner deemed most desirable according to an internationalised standard of practice. HRM and HRS students

were prepared to perform this style in order to perpetuate a fantastical representation of the Philippines as a touristic destination, of which they - alongside the beaches, the souvenirs and the food - would become a part. It is my argument that the racial, sexual, and political undertones of this facet of the 'Philippine' utopic could be, and are, put to work beyond the realms of tourate production as part of the process by which work overseas is made desirable to Filipino young people. My suggestion is that in the Philippines, labour migration and tourism produce ideological repertoires that overflow into one another, mutually contributing to the imagination and fantasy of each other's outcomes.

The intersections between utopics and labour production indicate another means by which the allures of work overseas can be understood. Pursuing the possibilities of a transnational theory of labour that merges labour overseas with that in the Philippines, I argue that the apparatus of schooling is attuned to particular modes of foreign desire and consumption, and in doing so follow Neferti Tadiar (2004: 52) in showing how 'transnational labour' can occur *within* the Philippines through the apparatus of tourism, and thus argue for ways in which the tourate can be considered within the same critical analysis as the diaspora workforce.

The interrelatedness of (and similarities between) specialised migrant labour supply and tourate production mean that, from the point of view of the ISA and its students, the same forces that are capable of rendering Filipino workers desirable as part of a tourate utopic can also make them desirable as a racially and sexually stereotyped class of labour. In a sense this is a scaling up of the economic specialisations and practical niches forced on *bakla* in the Philippines. The failure and humiliation of gay students when attempting to live up to the expectations of the sexual stereotype deployed by the ISA teachers - which is part of *bakla* experience of social life - suddenly became the experience of *all* the students in relation to the wider world. In this way the structural violence of labour migration is made highly personal and intimate, as the other students must now risk the vulnerability to failure and shame endured in *bakla* performances.

A reminder of this risk came very shortly before I left the Philippines at the end of my fieldwork, when a scandal engulfed the ISA college and led to great controversy and gossip among the students and teachers involved in the HRM and HRS courses. It had been revealed that Mr Leonard had been in a sexual relationship with one of the students, and although this was both legal (the student had been of consenting age) and the school allowed these relationships, the fact that the relationship had been same sex had caused uproar. Teacher-student sexual relationships were far from unusual, and even at the high school, I knew of two older graduating students who had romantic attachments with teachers. The question that always hung over these relationships, however, was whether or not it was ever fully consensual, given the power of the teacher over the student. For straight relationships, the question was never enough to expose the teacher or student to much public criticism or scrutiny. In Mr Leonard's case, however, there had been gossip circulating for some time as to whether he exploited or mistreated his students, and this was given greater credence when the student involved with him had suggested that Mr Leonard had blackmailed him into the relationship with the threat of bad grades.

Defenders, who said the student had lied, and detractors of Mr Leonard among the staff and students were very divided over the issue, which when I left the field had still not been resolved. Mr Leonard had resigned from his post and left town, leaving behind a great deal of animosity and a number of people expressing questions over the suitability of gay teachers to be in charge of students at all. Whereas before, most people at the college were publicly highly tolerant of the gay faculty and students, persistent myths that I had heard elsewhere about gay older men sponsoring students' education for sex began to surface, and characterisations of *bakla* as predatory began to emerge in people's comments on the incident.

I draw attention to this unfortunate story to illustrate a way in which touristic utopics override and can come dangerously detached from the actualities of everyday existence. Ness refers to this phenomenon as the "implosion" (2003: 13) of the 'neutral gaps' between real life and the utopics generated by tourism. In her own ethnographic case, Ness reports how the construction of a vast touristic leisure complex, which would rely upon

the ‘natural’ beauty of its location to help generate its fantastical utopic appeal, necessitated the relocation of already resident people and the demolition of their houses (*ibid*: 116-118). The ‘neutral gap’ between the tourist fantasy and the real existence of those living on its prospective site imploded with violent effect upon those residents.

The ISA case centres upon the performance of certain markers of gender and sexuality within service sector roles. The affecting of ‘gay’ and ‘feminine’ body practices and speech styles was encouraged by the ISA college and considered important for the production of workers who were at once acceptably modern by the ‘global’ standards necessary to make them competitive, and differentiable through the control of particularly ‘Filipino’ skills. Mr Leonard’s case, though, indicates how the navigation of these repertoires of fantasy can become detached from the realities they initially draw upon. The implicit vulnerability and volatility of *bakla* performance could not be controlled by the college’s narratives, which sought to harness it and commodify its value in specific ways. Instead, the failure - the ‘implosion’ - of this project exposed both Mr Leonard, the students and the college itself to a moral panic over the position of *bakla* performance within the pedagogy, and consequently the position of *bakla* in the school.

In this chapter I have attempted to show how particular narratives of desire and fantasy operate within and influence the articulation of the tourate, international labour migration and schooling in the Philippines. However, I have retained a narrow focus on those narratives asserted by dominant discursive forces: the state, the ISA, the needs of foreign capital, and so on. This picture is only partial, and in the next chapter I look to expand it. By examining in detail a series of young people’s stories as they navigate through schooling and towards potential migrations, I look at what other kinds of imaginaries and desires might both motivate them, and potentially elude them.

Chapter 7

'Mag-abroad':

Geography, temporality and mobility in Batangas and beyond

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I introduced some of the kinds of recreational travel undertaken in Batangas within the context of tourate production, though day trips and excursions to 'resorts' constituted only a small proportion of people's travel. As mentioned, Palaw and Santa Clara were located on a major highway through the province, well served locally by *jeepney* routes, and also connected by inter-provincial coach routes. For many of the students and teachers in Palaw and Santa Clara travel between the small towns off the highway was common; students would often be asked to run errands such as delivering groceries or small packages, or an evening would be spent making social calls to friends or relatives. For those living in Palaw, travelling to larger towns such as Santa Clara was a weekly occurrence for many, usually to shop for things unavailable at the market in Palaw or to socialise at the McDonalds or Jolibee restaurants. Longer-distance travel was less common, but most students I knew would make the journey to Nasugbu, Lipa, Batangas City or Tagaytay with family (or, less frequently, with friends) around once a month, often to go to the cinema, and some would occasionally travel further to visit relatives in neighbouring provinces. While coaches were available, and preferred for longer journeys, the most common mode of transport over any distance was the multi-seat van called a PUV (Public Utility Vehicle). These were faster and more regular than coaches, and while they were mostly used as passenger transport plenty of people used them as light haulage, paying for extra seats to carry goods.

Because at least some travel was required to go anywhere other than the small town surroundings of Palaw, travel and movement were constants of social life: wishing people a 'happy trip' was one of the most ubiquitous English phrases. In addition to travel and movement for socialisation or shopping, both students and adult family members often travelled long distances in commuting to their place of work or study; at the International Science Academy (ISA), several students came from outside of the province, and so

stayed at a lodging house run by the school in Santa Clara. The regular movement of many of the students I knew meant that I spent a great deal of time travelling with them, and came to realise just how normal travel was. Its place as a normative and habitual social action in Batangas is suggestive of some iterations of a contemporary anthropological interest in mobility and movement. Contrasting ethnographic material on displacement, border regions and migration with the assumed ‘rootedness’ of people, the boundedness of culture and the stasis of social organisation (Malkki 1992: 25), anthropologists have begun to take more interest in ‘regimes of mobility’ (Schiller & Salazar 2013) that capture an alternative conceptualisation of the basis of social life (Dalakoglou & Harvey 2012; Monroe 2014; Green 2015), one in which “it makes more sense to take mobility in its many forms as a given” (Allerton 2013: 176).

In this chapter, I engage with this paradigm by not only exploring how everyday acts of mobility were understood and practiced, but also placing mobilities of differing scales in relation to a particularly powerful iteration of travel: transnational migration. In Palaw and Santa Clara, the phrase used by many students and young people to describe an anticipated future working overseas was the Taglish verb ‘*mag-abroad*’ (to go abroad).⁷⁹ Used to capture any number of possible careers, the existence of ‘*mag-aabroad ako*’ (I will go abroad) or ‘*nag-aabroad*’ (going abroad) as viable and coherent descriptions of one’s aspirations was itself revealing of the logic and motivation behind many anticipated transnational migrations. When I asked students what they wanted to become or do when they were older, *mag-aabroad* was routinely offered as an answer, sometimes without greater explanation, alongside others’ plans to become a police officer, a teacher, or an engineer. What this livelihood would entail was described to me in terms of the monetary reward it offered, or ‘*mataas na suweldo*’ (high wages), the fact that it would obviously involve working outside of the Philippines (though working as a seafarer in Philippine waters fell within the scope of *nag-aabroad*) and the hardship this might entail, and its association with a higher standard of living (often expressed as ‘*maalwang buhay*’ or ‘a comfortable life’).

The kind of *maalwang buhay* present in many students' imagined futures differed in a number of ways, and some of these distinctions are explored throughout the chapter. Higher standards of living were ascribed to those who worked overseas in two distinct ways. One's reward for overseas work could be realised by a return to the Philippines, and an investment of one's wealth in financial and social capital. The evidence that students used for narratives of successful 'returning' migrants (cf. Parreñas 2010) came from the surrounding social environment, informed by occasional interactions with former migrants who wielded remarkable economic and political power. Conspicuous outlays might include the purchase of a large house, investment in a small business such as a *jeepney* route, trike, or sari-sari shop, or participation in municipal-level political organisation such as that practiced by Jesusa (see chapter 4).

Money sent back as remittances also contributed to understandings of what constituted a comfortable existence in the Philippines: much gossip centred on which relative working overseas had bought a classmate a new smartphone, and the arrival of other items of exotic material culture acted as reminders of the possibilities that *nag-aabroad* offered. But it also served to cultivate particular ideas about the kind of livelihood that could produce this surplus of money in the first place. Consequently, an alternative route to *maalwang buhay* considered by the students was through permanent emigration, and *nag-aabroad* was seen by a small number of students, especially at the ISA, as a means by which they could move out of the Philippines to live in a better country. The view of the Philippines as economically stagnant and lacking in certain material and cultural luxuries was commonplace in Batangas, and so some students could not envisage a desirable future life in which they remained in the country.

Precisely how these differing imaginaries of the results and aims of transnational migration were expressed is illuminating, as in their assumptions and expectations students highlighted a number of important, but less explicit, understandings about the effects that *nag-aabroad* was expected to have. In other chapters I have described the complex interactions between people in Batangas and objects of desire that were considered to be in some way foreign or 'abroad' (educational styles, sexualities, architecture, certain kinds

of money); here I will explore how the plans and aspirations of students that are oriented overseas operate within the same framework. This first involves a consideration of how imagining *nag-aabroad* intersects with existing ideologies of geography and place in the Philippines, which I attempt in the section on the politics of remoteness.

For students in Batangas ‘abroad’ did not just refer to a place. A further argument of this chapter is that - for the students with whom I discussed it - *mag-abroad* held conceptual currency for talking about temporality as well as space. In interpreting their stories and ideas, I aim for an analytic approach that is able to synthesise both the characterisations of ‘abroad’ as a place and as a temporal possibility, as this is the kind of meaning it carried for the students themselves. As with ideologies of geography, aspirations and desires toward the future also indexed restriction and stasis. Most students were optimistic about their futures, and none considered there to be no means by which they could possibly improve their quality of life. This does not, however, mean that the students were neither unaware nor uncritical of the limitations and obstacles to their desired future lives; this awareness permeates their stories in this chapter.

I orient my discussion around the stories of a number of students at different educational institutions and at slightly different stages in their lives. Their stories display differing orientations towards migration as both a spatial and temporal possibility, and all of them incorporate an expectation of the need or desire to ‘go abroad’ into their imagined futures and their actions and practice in the present. Before introducing them, however, I contextualise the spatial processes of *nag-aabroad* by exploring how certain ideologies of place and geography manifested in Batangas, and introduce the ways in which acts of mobility were structured within these constraints.

Remoteness and Mobility

Though I had regular contact through Palaw National High School (NHS) with a number of students, and often travelled with them to some of their homes, my efforts to get to know all their families were restricted by practical concerns. This was partly due to the wide distribution of students’ households in the rural *barangay* that the school had been

built to serve, and the consequent difficulty of accessing them regularly. In most of my preliminary interviews with teachers at the school, the problem of lengthy commutes for the most remote students was brought up as a major obstacle to maintaining regular attendance, assuring that students had time to do homework, and even allowing them time to get enough sleep. One teacher commented that:

T: “*Ang estudyante ang malayo sa school, halimbawa, sa Mataywanac, kapag uwi sila they have to clean the house, they have to do chores, at tapos lang nag-aral. Alas nuwebe, alas dies. Tapos, mag-gising sila alas kuwatro, to catch the jeep! Of course, they are still pagod, di ba? If they live closer, they can study better at school.*” (The students that are far from the school, for example, in Toong [a *barangay* of the Palaw municipality] if they go home they have to clean the house, they have to do chores, and only then study. At 9pm, 10pm. Then, they get up at 4am, to catch the jeep! Of course, they are still tired, right? If they live closer, they can study better at school.)

The problem the teacher described is one experienced by those concerned with the accessibility of schooling all over the Philippines, which is hindered by the mountainous terrain and lack of effective infrastructure throughout the archipelago. This problem of geography is in fact demonstrated by the rural *barangay* of Toong, and by Palaw municipality as a whole. The town of Palaw is situated on a well-paved and busy road from the coast, which heads north over the uplands of Cavite to the national capital, Manila. The region surrounding Palaw consists mostly of flat sugar fields, with some areas to the north and east containing foothills of the mountains over the provincial border.

Palaw NHS lies just outside the north limits of the town, the farthest southwest corner of a long and narrow *barangay* extending from the town up towards the foothills proper, which are encapsulated within Toong *barangay*. The school’s *barangay*, Paaralan, straddles a single (intermittently) paved road that strings together isolated farmsteads and *purok* (subdivisions of the *barangay* made up of a hamlet of three or four households), set back from the highway along dirt tracks that only tractors could drive along without diffi-

culty. From the most distant reaches of these *barangay*, students might have to walk for an hour, then ride a *jeepney* for a further hour in order to make it to school.

In the fourth-year class I shadowed to conduct my research, a little less than half of all the students lived in Toong, Paaralan, and a neighbouring, rural *barangay* (the school had intake from a further twenty). This fact, as well as its location beyond the church cemetery and a small river on the road out of town, reinforced teachers' and students' informal conceptions of the school as 'rural' or '*bukid*', despite its location within walking distance of the town. Until 2006 when Palaw NHS was built, these remote, rural *barangay* were essentially unserved by public schools, and unless one could afford to go to the private Catholic school run by the Church in Palaw (very few in this region could), formal education was more or less out of reach. For the rest of the municipality, greater numbers of paved roads branching off the highway into the flat fields meant greater mobility and ability to access the other schools built near the main road. The social construction of *bukid* and its association with both geographic inaccessibility and a remoteness from state institutions such as schools must be placed within a wider deployment of oppositions in the geography of the Philippines that have manifested as organising structural forces. It is within these discursive oppositions - between rural and urban, coastal and mountain, central and remote, interior and exterior, home and foreign - that contemporary understandings of mobility must be contextualised.

I have discussed in chapters 1 and 2 that an urbanised conception of modernity, epitomised for the students by the idiom of competitiveness, was propagated and idealised as the most important outcome of schooling, and that this project of teaching and learning habitual registers understood as allowing access to urban life that would be, by definition, superior and more desirable than life in the rural setting of my fieldwork. Far from being an isolated process fostered within the schooling system, this was reiterated throughout public life and understanding of the political relationship between rural communities, larger towns, regional capitals, and Manila itself.

One particular example of this came in the form of warnings about the New People's Army (NPA), the military wing of the country's communist party. Founded in 1969, the NPA operated as a guerrilla army fighting against the Marcos regime, and in many senses followed the pre-colonial military tactic of refuge in the mountains to avoid the violence of the state (see above). Now, the NPA are best known for occasional acts of sabotage, assassination and kidnap against government and police targets. I would be warned that - as I was a foreigner - if I went away from the main towns and roads I ran the risk of kidnap or worse at the hands of guerrilla soldiers hiding out in the forests and mountains. During my research I did not actually encounter anyone who admitted to be in the NPA, but gossip and rumours circulating about particular individuals were recurrent. Of more interest, however, was observing how the threat of NPA involvement in a particular place was used as a register of that place's impoverishment in terms of education, wealth, and social class. As such, one would never hear someone from Palaw expressing concerns over NPA presence in the larger town of Santa Clara, but when I was preparing to move to Palaw, my classmates and teachers at the vocational college were full of cautions, situated alongside complaints that the smaller town was boring, too quiet, and the local farmers unfamiliar with modern life.

However, a conception of the mountains as a just a perilous wilderness is incomplete. Towards the end of my fieldwork, one of the high school teachers, Ma'am Lina, was engaged to a soldier, Ramon, who lived at an air force base in Cavite, and on two occasions I visited him with her. Ramon was from Nasugbu, on the western coast of Batangas, and was in his early thirties, having completed his airman training in 2012. Ma'am Lina and I would ride her motorcycle halfway to the base and meet Ramon and several of his military colleagues at a beachfront 'resort' to sing *videoke* and drink beer. According to Ramon and some of the other soldiers and airmen sitting with us, the mountains in nearby western Cavite were definitely crawling with hidden NPA combatants, but this fact presented an opportunity rather than a threat. Ramon told me that it was during training exercises and military manoeuvres in the forests and mountains that they were '*totoong laki, totoong kawal*' (real men, real soldiers). The masculinity in play was distinctively Filipino, as I was informed that Filipino men should be able to survive in the forest: Ramon

reminded me (in English) on both occasions I asked him about his training that the mountains and the forest were the Filipino's "natural habitat". His and his colleagues' natural woodsmanship, combined with military discipline and equipment, was what gave them the edge over the communist cells (one of which he and others in his squadron claimed they had tracked, unseen, for five days).⁸⁰

This perspective on the masculinising and anti-governmental potential of the mountains of Cavite caused me to reflect on the warnings I had received about the NPA. While some of the teachers in Santa Clara thought the more remote locations would be dangerous for me, their warnings did not exclude particular forms of approval of life in more rural areas. Various, the middle-class, urbane and university-educated teachers at the ISA characterised the countryside as being conducive to a more relaxed lifestyle with greater leisure, more peace and quiet, and a somehow more 'authentic livelihood' (*tunay na kabuhayan*); meaning, it seemed, a greater familiarity with agricultural practice and 'traditional Filipino' existence.

This was in contrast to their own lifestyle and worldview, which most considered relatively urbanised and cosmopolitan. The dichotomy present in such talk - taken to its extreme through the juxtaposition of the Cavite hinterland and the Manila metropolis - represented a complex clash between a both pre- and anti-modern, agriculturalist, anarchic 'rural', and a hyper-modern, state capitalist 'urban'. In other words, interaction with the state was simultaneously seen as oppressive and as a means of exploration, expansion and possibility. Ruralism, remoteness and the extreme geography of the '*bundok*' were similarly multi-faceted: at once a dangerous wilderness filled with murderous NPA soldiers, and an idealised, bucolic, but anachronistic version of the nation. This organisation of symbols is similar to that identified by Smita Lahiri regarding the religious sites at Mount Banahaw (see chapter 2), which became consecrated as a popular emblem of national culture by a metropolitan intelligentsia in the 1990s. The elite imaginary of a cultural identity generated a similar dichotomy between urban and rural, in which the superstition and folk religion were uncomfortably appropriated in creating a national 'tradition' from attributes associated with the *bundok* (Lahiri 2005).

In the next section I introduce four students who move across and negotiate these geographic dichotomies. They all participate in different ways in the schooling system, which all of them consider to be one means of extending the range of their movement by facilitating *nag-aabroad*, though, as I will show and is apparent from the teachers' concerns over remoteness, exactly how schooling affects students' mobility is complex. Their movements within the ideological and geographic terrain described in this section also inform this transnational and anticipated mode of mobility.

Elton

One victim of the unequal distribution of schools and infrastructure mentioned earlier in this section was Elton. I met Elton in early 2013, towards the end of my fieldwork, through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Palaw. The ALS was run out of the large primary school in the centre of town, and convened once a week to provide education for students who required remedial classes, having missed years of official schooling, or older men and women who never attended school and wished to catch up. Elton was 23, and wanted to be a seafarer, but had missed two years of high school, and so wasn't able to apply to colleges. He lived with his mother and six-year-old brother in a very remote part of Toong, just beyond the very last section of the concrete road into the *barangay* that led up into the mountains out of Palaw. His family cropped cassava, a less profitable crop but the most feasible, their land being too high up for sugar. The family lived in a small bamboo house within the parcel they rented.

After attending the Toong elementary school to the age of 11, the remoteness of the house meant that Elton had been forced to travel for over two hours each way to get to a public school in the neighbouring municipality. His route was so arduous he never put on his school shoes until he had arrived, as he had to make his way down a couple of miles of unpaved paths, and across a river, before he could catch a *jeepney* the rest of the way. After two years, Elton had been forced to give up, partly out of exhaustion and the impracticality of attending school, but also because his father had left his mother, and he had to stay to help provide for her and his siblings. His younger sister Vitto had been able to attend high school at Palaw NHS, and then college, and now lived in Calamba province.

Elton and his mother had great pride in her achievement (and their own in getting her through school), but the difficulty of achieving Elton's dream (*pangarap*) of working on a ship still caused he and his mother great pain.

Despite the incredible difficulty Elton and his family faced in getting to school, never mind paying for tuition, or completing their studies, the passion and desperation for this means to alleviate their situation was always palpable. Elton's desire was not just limited to the material outcomes of schooling, however. Schooling, and the subsequent dream of working on a ship would entail more than just a windfall remittance. Intertwined in Elton's dream was an understanding of an expanded horizon that allowed contact with people beyond his remote house on the mountainside. One of the most enjoyable things for him about attending the ALS was being able to meet people from far outside his own *barangay*, as the catchment for the school extended even beyond the Palaw municipality. The people Elton was most excited about meeting were the girls (*'chiks'*) in the class, some of whom were a similar age to himself. I believe this particular kind of motivation for expanding his horizons also carried into his understandings of seafaring and wider travel, as when I left Batangas, he wanted me to put him in contact with friends of mine in Manila and overseas, but especially female friends.

Each commute he made became weighted with the symbolism of entering a community that Elton considered himself obscured or excluded from by both the literal remoteness of his house, but also the way in which this was intertwined with other markers of class habitus; he would complain that the mud or dust on his shoes, or the sweat on his shirt, would point to how far he had travelled, and especially how far he had had to walk. The sheer strain of constantly travelling so far for his schooling almost certainly meant that Elton would have to move away from home for a significant period if he was to study at a maritime college, a move he and his mother were both financially unable to arrange and also reluctant for him to make, and so it was difficult to see his dream as feasible. But the act of travelling itself was also a refutation of the structuring effects of remoteness, and by attending the ALS Elton saw himself as both literally and symbolically moving closer to the institutions and social networks of an educated person and a professional worker.

Trudy

16-year-old Trudy was an extremely bright student at Palaw NHS, who participated in the student government, was active in the school's activities in the town, and was as capable in English and Spanish as I was in Tagalog. She did not come from a particularly wealthy family, however, being one of four siblings born into a farming family on the outskirts of the Palaw *poblasyon*. The family maintained a reasonable standard of living thanks to owning a snack stall in the plaza, where I would often spend evenings chatting with Trudy and her relatives, and having their household income supplemented by remittances from her brother-in-law, Alberto, who had worked at an airport in Qatar since 2010. Trudy had spent her first year of high school at a Montessori School in Santa Clara, but had transferred to the public school in Palaw due to the expensive fees. At the end of my fieldwork she was preparing to leave for further study at the University of Cavite in the neighbouring province, making her only the second member of her family to attend college and, if she graduated, the first to complete a degree (the same elder sister had matriculated in Computer Science at the 'New Era University' run by the Iglesia ni Cristo in Manila, but had been forced to drop out after one year).

Whenever I asked Trudy about her future - her education, her imagined jobs, her desired family life - she was usually pretty sure that a job or contract labour overseas was not for her, as she felt a strong need to keep a close relationship with her family, and was concerned that spending long periods of time outside the country would be too difficult for both her and them. She held this attitude despite circumstances that might superficially appear highly conducive to enabling and encouraging her to work overseas. Her intelligence and attitude meant she undoubtedly could have successfully gained the qualifications necessary to apply successfully to an agency and work abroad, and her experience of Alberto's relatively successful migrations had exposed her to '*nag-aabroad*' as a practical possibility. Indeed, her elder brother Tomas would be joining Alberto in Qatar on his next tour, and her mother, whenever asked how she felt about her children going abroad, would laugh, "why not?". Further, in addition to her excellent English and self-taught Spanish, her online perusal of and fascination with American films - she had only been to

the cinema once, as she felt Filipino films looked ‘*mumurahin*’ (cheap) - and Japanese manga comics and cartoons were evidence of an avid cultural xenophilia.

Although ambivalent about work abroad, Trudy was certain that her future would lead her away from Palaw and even Batangas. I had arranged to record a longer interview with her once during the school holidays, and so came to sit on the narrow wooden bench beside the family stall, while Trudy prepared *siomai* and *siopao* dumplings in a big steamer. Our conversation shifted to what she expected to get out of going to college after graduating high school (she was interested in the vocational college in Santa Clara at the time), and after expressing the obvious motivation of a good a job and salary, she expanded on her feelings of anticipation and excitement:

T: “*Gusto kong magkita ang estudyante sa iba-iba sa Batangas. Sa Santa Clara, iba yung tao doon sa Palaw. May ibang kultura nila, kumpara sa tagapalaw ... sa Santa Clara, I want to see other faces, not just in Palaw ... That’s why sumasama ako ang kampings, pupunta ako sa ibang place to experience ginagawa nila doon. Because I like new things!*” (I want to meet students from different places in Batangas. In Santa Clara, people are different from in Palaw. They have a different culture, compared to people from Palaw ... in Santa Clara, I want to see other faces, not just in Palaw ... That’s why I joined the [school organised] camp trips, I went to different places to experience what they do there. Because I like new things!)

This sentiment was not an unusual one for Trudy - or indeed for most students in Palaw and Santa Clara - to express. Trudy would often talk enthusiastically about her occasional trips to other places in the Philippines to visit family in Manila and the northern Visayan island of Panay, and to participate in school camping excursions and Church events in other places in Batangas. I became used to being quizzed about life in the UK by everyone in Palaw, but Trudy was by far the most inquisitive, fascinated by and revelling in the novelty and alterity of my life back home, especially asking questions about school, computers, and transport. This interest and desire for new experiences informed her understanding of an ideal path for her life course, which would lead her away from her rural

home and into a variety of different contexts. This desire to move away from home to broaden one's experience was not unique amongst the students in Palaw and Santa Clara. However, given the economic significance of international and domestic migration for many Filipinos, including large numbers in Trudy's own locality, her excitement was interesting precisely because of the kinds of imagined engagements with foreign experiences it *did not* evoke. By this I mean that Trudy imagined idealised forms of mobility and the foreign, premised on freedom, leisure and exploration, which involved encounters with the exotic *within* the Philippines, and not those generated by work overseas.

On my return to the Philippines in 2014, I visited Trudy in the college boarding house in Cavite City where she was studying a 3-year course in IT and business, for which she had won a scholarship on the back of an essay competition. She said that while she found the course both a little boring and hard work, and she missed her family back in Palaw, she liked living with other people her age and being able to socialise with other students in the environment of a city-based campus. For her, the biggest change since moving to Cavite had been her decision to stop going to the Iglesia ni Cristo, though it had only ever been her mother, sister and herself who had attended in Palaw. This was to do, she said, with not wanting to close herself off within an small and inward-looking community like the Iglesia ni Cristo congregation,⁸¹ and when I recalled her desire "to see other faces", she laughed and joked that she now thought everyone in Palaw looked the same as one another.

Angel

From a similar background as Trudy, but with markedly different current circumstances and at a later stage of her life, was the ISA student Angel. Angel was 19, and the eldest of six siblings. She had grown up in Santa Clara, and attended her local *barangay* elementary school and the Santa Clara National High School. She had been a solid student without precocity, and was now three years into a accountancy degree at the college. Like Trudy, her family had been farmers, but were smallholders rather than tenants to a landowner. When Angel was 18 her father had died and her mother had been forced to sell their fields to his family members, and although Angel remembers that there had been

money available from this sale for a while, her father's family had been unscrupulous in their deals with her mother. As such, she, her mother and her 5 siblings lived at her grandmother's house in a *barangay* on the outskirts of Santa Clara, where they were supported by her mother's work as a trike driver.

Shortly after having first met Angel at the ISA she invited me to come to see where she worked. Although the college encouraged its students to get part-time jobs, Angel was more pressurised into earning extra money than most on account of her family's loss of income. Angel had managed to get work as a crèche attendant at the enormous SM Mall in Batangas City 50 kilometres away, partly through the recommendation of her mother's eldest brother who worked full-time as a supervisor at an SM Mall in Bulacan in Quezon Province to the east. Her shifts would start at 9am, and so we would make our way to the main road at around 6am to catch one of the white PUVs with 'Batangas City' stencilled onto the side. Angel would work for two to three days at a time in the mall, staying while she was there in a lodging house by the river next to the mall, overseen by a stern matronly figure named '*ate*' (elder sister) Esma. The lodging house, one part of a complex of buildings built (but not run) by the mall to house employees, was comprised of a series of bunk rooms where Angel and her co-workers would sleep, a wash room, and a large kitchen with an electric hob and a sink where everyone would prepare meals and, after work, drink together.

Usually the hostel had about six or seven other inhabitants, and was not too crowded. The majority of the workers were Angel's age, and were currently studying or were on hiatus, having run out of money or failed exams. Angel jokingly explained to me that the malls and other employers of sales staff liked younger workers, as they were more '*presko*' or fresh, and were more likely to be friendly and appealing to shoppers. Perhaps because of this, the turnover of jobs was very high, and no one that Angel introduced me to at the lodging house had worked in the same job for more than six months. Everyone told me that they would eventually quit of their own accord, but this seemed unlikely given the hours of stories I was told of other co-workers or former lodgers fired for minor slip-ups, and the complaints made constantly about the draconian rules governing behaviour on the

job and appearance. For example, Yumi, a young woman who worked with Angel, was attending the Batangas City branch of the same college I worked at Santa Clara, and would have to put on copious quantities of makeup - including rouge, false lashes, eye glitter and little shiny stickers - for her job as a cashier in the mall supermarket. Angel insisted her job monitoring the children's playpen was far easier by comparison.

Angel actually went on to hold her job at the mall for eight months before she quit to start a work placement at a firm in Manila organised through the college, which she had only just begun when my fieldwork came to an end. Due to the working class backgrounds of her parents, Angel looked more closely to her mother's siblings for models for her future life and expectations, as she was unusual in having attended tertiary-level schooling: *"baka, akong maging katulad ni Auntie, kasi pumasok siya sa kolehiyo at trabaho na sa opisina"* (probably, I will be like Auntie, because she went to college and now works in an office). As well as the SM employee in Bulacan, her two aunts worked as a supervisor at a training centre in Paranaque City, and as an accountant in Las Pinas, both cities in Metro Manila. The first auntie had in fact worked abroad in Singapore for one year before she got pregnant to her husband on a trip home and then quit her job. It was using her life course and experiences that Angel both pragmatically and idealistically framed her own potential future. In Angel's telling, Singapore was a superior location to work and live than even America, an opinion she based on a comparison between her aunt's lifestyle and that of people she knew of who had worked and lived in the United States. Workers in America were paid less, she said, the work was harder, you were too far away from the Philippines to come home easily, and the weather was too cold there, as well.

For Angel, it was taken for granted that she would end up working outside of Santa Clara, and she saw her experience moving back and forth from Batangas City as being preparation for that. After she had told me that she would be interested in work abroad in the future, I asked her if her '*lakbay*' (journey) from Santa Clara to Batangas City got her ready for becoming an international migrant. She laughed at my choice of words: *"Haha, oo, 'lakbay' sa USA, di ba? Siguro masyadong malayo. Pero, kapag akong mag-aabroad, matulong ni Dani, ni Alfie. Gusto ko natrabaho dito muna, at tapos sa abroad."* (Haha,

yes, ‘journey’ to the USA, right? Maybe that’s too far. But, if I go abroad I’ll help Dani, and Alfie [her youngest siblings]. I want to work here first, and then abroad).

As with Trudy’s conflict over her desire for closeness to both her family and the exotic trappings of ‘foreignness’, Angel experienced a conflict between different kinds of familial responsibility. While her auntie gave up a well-paid job in Singapore to bring up her child back home with her husband, Angel also felt pressure as an eldest sibling to ‘*matulong*’ (to help) her younger siblings, especially in the wake of the problems that had beset her family.

However, the tone with which Angel described this responsibility was strikingly different to her ideas about her current jobs at the mall and the work placement in Manila. Angel was often introverted and slightly prickly while at the college campus, but transformed into quite a different person when at the lodging house with others in her position. She occasionally remarked that “*natrabaho ako sa SM para sa tuition ko lang, wala pa*” (I work at the mall for my tuition, nothing else), and while this ostensibly came across as a statement of dogged intent and financial discipline in completing her studies, it became clear that it showed a desire to allocate a space for her own sense of self beyond familial responsibility. Work and the social life surrounding it was often fun, and lodging house occupants did enjoy the experience of living without parental supervision for the first time. Angel’s interpretation of her experience as a domestic migrant worker reflects on a smaller scale some of the dilemmas she envisioned facing as a potential OFW later in life.

J-Ray

Coming from a very different background from Trudy and Angel was 23-year-old J-Ray (short for John Raymundo), another student at the vocational college, who during my fieldwork, was actually in the process of dropping out of school and considering whether to go to Italy to join the majority of the rest of his family. His father was one of ten siblings who had, one by one, all left to work and then live in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s. Now all but two (one was in Singapore) had left, including J-Ray’s father, while his estranged mother lived with her family in Dumaguete in the Visayan Islands. These suc-

successful migrations had given the family a sizeable income from remittances, and J-Ray recollected that some of his earliest memories involved going to the pawnshop or bank to collect a monthly payment from overseas. J-Ray's upbringing had also been in Santa Clara, but his family's wealth meant that he had spent it living in his father and grandmother's large apartments in a new subdivision.

J-Ray had enjoyed an interesting time after he left home at the age of 18. Despite not having any post-high school qualifications he was fluent in English and was able to work for a string of call centres in the capital, mostly doing telesales for insurance and other financial products to American bank customers. He recounts being something of a playboy during this period, living by himself in a rented apartment and extravagantly squandering the bonuses he frequently won for outselling his co-workers, and laughs at how well he could fleece the Americans with a syrupy tone and polite phone manner. He delighted in particular in showing off the variety of American accents he had perfected, and even claimed that he could get customers to believe he was a woman in order to seduce them even more effectively. Apparently growing tired of this lifestyle, he returned to Santa Clara in 2009, and still with no desire to settle down anywhere, he enrolled at the vocational college to get a degree in business management.

However, in 2011 he contracted appendicitis followed by a series of infections, which left him much weaker and more reflective about his lifestyle. Since the end of 2012 he had started to work online as an English teacher for two websites based in Japan, Taiwan and China, teaching schoolchildren aged 4-16. Charging 50 pesos per hour (roughly £0.80), he was very content with the job and income, and currently provided lessons for 14 students. Because of his sabbatical for illness, he was able to frequently skip classes at the college, only cursorily completing the requirements for his course. He was more interested in weighing up the attraction of continuing his job as a tutor, applying to a prestigious law school in Manila, or joining his father and siblings in Italy. His younger brother, the last remaining relative on his father's side left in the Philippines (other than his grandmother), was in fact in the process of leaving for Italy himself, and departed shortly before I did.

J-Ray's experience of the good life in Manila chimed with the expectations I had heard other students younger than him express when considering migration to the capital for work. It was because of this that I was somewhat suspicious of the tales of his exploits, particularly as he seemed to have few connections with friends from that time in his life. Within J-Ray's friendship group he enjoyed a great deal of status based on his experience of work in the capital, and classmates would refer to his opinions and guidance about good places to apply for jobs or how to deal with work outside of Santa Clara. His mastery of English and knowledgeable taste in foreign films (particularly Japanese anime and Hollywood action films) also distinguished him as worldly and cultured amongst classmates at the college, and in my presence he frequently joked in a manner designed to be understood specifically by other English speakers. He would also pass judgement on the differences between city dwellers and those in the local school he attended, noting the out of fashion clothes and unsophisticated tastes of young people in Santa Clara as compared to Manila.

The Exoticism of Travel and 'Nababato' (Turning to Stone)

All of these stories show how discussion and thought about travel, distance and mobility were able to animate a wide range of aspirations and imagined places, futures, and social relations. In the remainder of this chapter I want to develop the relation between the spatial and temporal aspects of mobility, beginning with a theme common to all of the stories: that of the exoticism of foreignness. While this perception of exoticism incorporated material culture, *maalwang buhay*, and certain media, most objects of desire were premised on expanded social interactions, within which sex was an important element. The imagination of sexual possibility and derestriction animated Elton's ideas about travel, seafaring and my own social capital, and also the way in which J-Ray presented his erstwhile and Manila-based 'playboy' persona to his friends and to me.

The role of travel and distance in the sexual imagination was crucial across a number of other realms of social experience too, in that elopement and keeping one's lover secret by travelling away from one's hometown were popular themes of gossip and salacious jokes and stories. In 'traditional' household layouts, the practice of sharing a bedroom with

one's parents until you moved out meant that travelling to meet your lover secretly was the only way to ensure privacy. The limited transportation of the students meant that they were less able to practice these kind of romantic encounters; students without transport had to make do with long walks into the countryside with their partners, and those who acquired motorcycles instantly became inundated with requests for lifts to see boyfriends and girlfriends, and also became the subject of rumours themselves.

Rumours of adults, including - scandalously - some of the teachers at Palaw NHS, indulging in lovers in the next town over were commonplace, however, and some of my acquaintances in the town did confide that they had partners in other towns. It is also possible that, for some, transnational migration extended the sexual freedom and inhibition elicited through travel and distance even further: as discussed in chapter 4, 'going abroad' usually exacerbated the perception of a person's sexual promiscuity.⁸² Women struggled more with rumours about their exploits beyond public scrutiny, but they were not seen as more promiscuous; rather, it was considered more acceptable for men to have multiple girlfriends. Many people (usually men) viewed my geographic distance from my wife during my fieldwork as reason enough for me to have a relationship in the Philippines, and I was often regaled with admiring tales about seafarers and other men who travelled for their work who had families in multiple places around the country.

Sexual encounters as part of the exoticism of foreignness and travel are indicative, but must also be considered in terms of a general desire for widening social relationships (see chapter 5). This kind of existent social context around sex and expanding social relations highlights the importance of potential migrants' negotiations of the romance and socialisation mobility may entail. The desire, excitement and fantasy surrounding ideas of the foreign - best expressed by Trudy - reflect the foreign's unusual potency and the ubiquity with which reference to objects beyond the Philippine islands is made in public life, often as registers of success. What Trudy desired, however, was not merely contact with this (a form of which would be accomplished by work overseas), but instead a form of touristic encounter premised on financial capability to go on holiday abroad and consume touristic products of other places. Similarly, when I asked Trudy's mother, Josefina, whether she

wanted to go abroad, she replied that: *“Hindi ko gusto. Pero pwede ako pumunta sa abroad kung fieldtrip or tour ng anak ko kapag nagtrabaho sila sa abroad.”* (I don’t want to. But I could go abroad on a field trip or tour with my children if they worked abroad).

Here is stated the both specific desire of foreign experience that is unsuccessfully attained (or obtained in an impoverished form) through overseas contract work, whilst simultaneously recognising the constrictions of the Philippines’ position in the global economy. Josefina would be unable to travel abroad without money from the ‘*mag-abroad*’ of her children, but still desires the prospect of travelling on a ‘*tour*’ or ‘*fieldtrip*’. Ideally, one would have access to the ‘consumable foreign’ - exemplified by Japanese and Korean media, American food, and holidays outside the Philippines - that turns the experience of OFWs as consumed objects on its head. A desire to consume and incorporate particular elements of ‘foreignness’ unproblematically into oneself is also present in Angel’s conflict over her familial responsibilities, and in J-Ray’s employment in the call centre.

J-Ray’s account of the debauched yet high-status lifestyle of the call centre agent in fact lends credence to some popular perceptions of call-centres and their workers from other parts of the world (Noronha & D’Cruze 2009: 142-143), though there are potentially other similarities, particularly his view of Americans as easily duped out of their money. In call centres in New Delhi, workers developed a similar characterisation of Americans as “rich but stupid”, but still enjoyed interacting with Americans on the phone, gaining perspective on their situation within global capitalism and creating rhetorical tactics by which the power imbalances between them and their customers could be minimised (Mirchandani 2004: 361-362). J-Ray enjoyed talking in ‘ethnographic’ terms about Americans, sharing the insights about their culture he had gleaned from many conversations with customers. Workers at call centres elsewhere in Manila have been offered ‘transcultural training’ about America (Friginal 2010: 160-162), which appears to offer some of the educational insights of which J-Ray was proud and interested him about the job.

The transnational interactions with foreigners were, for J-Ray, at once extractive, self-reinforcing and exotically enticing, and latterly, though to a lesser extent, he was motivat-

ed by the curiosity he had about the Chinese, Japanese and Taiwanese children he taught. Even these interactions contributed towards his construction of a global network of which he was a part: whereas Americans were wealthier but less canny than him, he compared himself to the Chinese in particular as an equal who, nevertheless, held elevated status over other Asians as they could not speak English as well as he could. This use of English to suggest an advantage (both culturally and economically) for Filipinos over their Asian neighbours was fairly common in Batangas, but has also been shown to contribute to the discourses of competitiveness mentioned in chapters 1 and 6. In Nicole Constable's account of Filipino servants and maids in Hong Kong, for instance, the migrant workers encountered the views amongst some Chinese employers that the ability to speak English better than Chinese or other Southeast Asian migrant workers indexed 'Westernisation' and education. These traits were considered desirable within the economic niche of domestic work and tutoring children, but were potentially threatening to attempts by employment agencies and the Hong Kong government to reinforce subservience and discipline amongst the migrant workforce (Constable 1997: 30, 78).

This kind of complex transnational and class politics is also latent in stories like J-Ray's. The conceptualisations of 'abroad' in the fantasies and desires of students in Batangas act as an animating force behind imagined networks of social and material relations. The romance of these potential relations is mediated by the realities of inequality that would likely characterise them, of which the students discussed here were aware to varying degrees. These sentiments parallel other anthropological accounts of mobility in Southeast Asian societies, where travel and journeying away from home during one's youth were strongly connected to both enjoyable and fulfilling personal endeavour, and important elements of social and familial reproduction (e.g. Winn 2008).

For instance, young, unmarried men in the Iban culture, a people living in Sarawak (the Malaysian portion of Borneo), would perform courageous journeys known as '*belajai*' or '*pegi*'. These were traditionally undertaken to collect valuable artefacts from foreign sources that would confer power and prestige on their family home when they returned, usually after several years, but also with the aim of enhancing their marriageability by

expanding their opportunities for courting and delineating coming-of-age (Freeman 1970: 222-224; Sather 2004: 230). The Minangkabau, from western Sumatra, have a similar (gendered) practice called '*merantau*', which involves young men spending lengthy periods of time away from their home before returning (Salazar 2015). This term has achieved an extended usage, and is widely used to mean 'migration' through much of Indonesia, possibly because the root word, '*rantau*', means an area outside of one's home region (Naim 1974: 150), which can of course be translated more generally to 'abroad'.

Thus far in this section, I have emphasised how these relations are expected to operate in a spatial register, creating local and inter-regional theories of geography and understandings of geopolitical relations. I now turn to a closer inspection of how these desires are understood to operate across time. Given that most of the students were not entirely naive to the risks of increased mobility and *nag-aabroad*, it is necessary to compare the allure of mobility to the risks of its opposite: most clearly expressed in concerns over the prospect of '*nababato*', which literally means turning to stone, but was used differently by some of my interlocutors. When schoolwork or chores weren't taking up the students' time (and occasionally when they were), many young people would characterise life in Palaw or Santa Clara, or in a particular situation, as '*bato*' (boring), and was often used alongside complaints that Palaw was too '*tahimik*' (quiet). '*Bato*' could also refer to the emotional condition of being bored, usually when a social environment considered the antithesis of the excitement and romance envisioned through mobility elicited such a state. More suggestive is the descriptions given to me by young people, particularly in the Palaw, of how to relieve '*bato*', namely through travel to and socialisation in bigger towns.

In the present discussion, '*bato*' has interesting metaphoric significance, likening as it does a lack of interest and excitement with stasis and atrophy. Despite being used to refer to places, persons, and actions, it is a processual term, its use suggesting that the quality of these things will create a gradual effect of becoming 'like stone'. The connection between movement in both space and time as indexes of aspiration and desire is apparent again, and also resembles examples in the literature of other circumstances where young

people are estranged or excluded from processes of economic advancement and aspiration. A comparison can be drawn with Chris Jeffrey's insights into '*timepass*' in India (Jeffrey 2010; Jeffrey & Young 2012), a term used by young students to describe the experience of inertness, immobility, or inability to progress, specifically within a setting of underemployment, over-qualification and unfulfilled professional and romantic aspirations. Jeffrey's analysis is situated within theories of how the social experience of time under conditions of neoliberal economic change is disrupted (e.g. Harvey 1990; Appadurai 2002), and this manifested (in practical terms) for his young informants in Meerut as an 'overabundance of time'. However, this phenomenon carried wider meanings for the students that I argue have many similarities with the use of '*bato*':

"Students also used the term 'timepass' to convey feeling left behind in Meerut. Students contrasted their own timepass in Meerut higher education with the buzz of metropolitan India ... What galled many students was the contrast between MC [Meerut College] and the evidence of globalisation that surrounded them on all sides, such as the signboards outside campus advertising the latest Kawasaki motorcycle and the principal's expensive jeep parked by the main gate."

(Jeffrey & Young 2012: 645-646)

For students in both Meerut and Batangas, negotiations with temporal discrepancy also involved negotiations with spatial discrepancy: the modernity and globalism in particular spaces is bound up with particular ways of moving through time, of progressing one's life. The linkages between mobility and progression in a number of aspects of life make clear the temporality of mobility in the Philippines, and the vitality the concept holds for young people's understandings of their sense of accomplishment within logics of aspiration and social mobility.

Rituals of Return and Reunion

Though this has been the focus of the chapter thus far, to describe conceptions of progress and success purely in terms of a desire for constant and expanding mobility obscures ways in which desires were also directed towards stasis and continuity, though often in

very specific ways defined, at least in part, by their interplay with acts of mobility. Elements of this relationship are present in Filomeno Aguilar's attempt to account for the exciting content of overseas migrations by likening them to rituals, claiming that "morphologically and structurally, international labour migration is an analogue of the ancient religious journey, a modern, secularised variant of the ritual pilgrimage" (1999: 102). While the unproblematic ascription of 'accomplishment' as defining the migrant experience fails to describe the conflicting motivations, responsibilities and concerns with which Trudy, Angel and J-Ray complicated their experiences, the phenomenological aspects of successful migrations described by my informants fit within Aguilar's attempt to return the emotion of migration to anthropological analysis.

Additionally, the temporal-geographic form of the ritual pilgrimage, which is fundamentally premised on a transformation followed by a *return* to your origins, points towards the kinds of desirable stasis I am interested in here. Edith and Victor Turner's classic treatment of pilgrimage refers to it as a 'kinetic ritual', in which a pilgrimage is only really complete if a subsequent return to a 'mundane' existence is made, having "made a spiritual step forward" (1978: xiii, 15).⁸³ Most accounts of Iban and Minangkabau ritual journeying also stress the importance of returning to complete the transformative elements of this rite of passage. This element of the desires that drive mobility and travel is particularly apparent when considering the social practices surrounding people returning from travel, which vary from small ritualised conversations to large celebrations.

In Batangas, almost the first thing asked to a returning traveller with whom you were acquainted would be "*may pasalubong ka ba?*" (do you have a gift/souvenir?). '*Pasalubong*' were small gifts that travellers who had been to another part of country would bring back to distribute amongst people that they met shortly after their return. Family members, friends, work colleagues and classmates could all expect to receive these gifts, which were usually delicacies local to the place they visited, though could also be more common items of confection such as milk candy called '*pastillas*', or a steamed rice cake called '*puto*', wrapped in a banana leaf. It was explained to me that the attraction of these treats were that, of course, one couldn't get these specialised items un-

less someone you knew had travelled. I was not exempt, and as a particularly mobile person I was required to provide interesting gifts to as many people as I could on my return from other parts of the province, Manila, or even the UK. In addition to the confection mentioned, *pasalubong* I returned with from abroad were mostly chocolates and candy that was unavailable in the Philippines, but also small toys for younger children and flavoured teas (a briefly popular fad towards the end of my fieldwork).

In some respects, the routine of giving and receiving *pasalubong* was a domestic version of a more widely-known form of gift exchange called ‘*balikbayan*’ boxes; large cardboard packages received from relatives overseas that contain a selection of luxurious foreign goods and food which can also be called *pasalubong* themselves (Alipio 2015: 236). *Balikbayan* boxes first appeared during Marcos’s rule, when Filipinos living abroad were encouraged to return home once a year, becoming *balikbayan* (home-comers) and bringing with them two duty-free boxes of gifts. Cory Aquino later expanded the policy to also allow *balikbayan* to spend up to \$1,000 duty-free when they returned to the Philippines.⁸⁴ *Balikbayan* and their boxes have received a great deal of analytic attention from social scientists, primarily as a window on how Philippine nationalism has been reproduced and expressed somewhat uneasily amongst a population living increasingly in diaspora (Blanc 1996; Rafael 1997: 269-273). More recently those anthropologists interested in theorising the relations between people and objects have explored how affect can be transferred through such relations over transnational borders (McKay 2004; Camposano 2012).

Of greater interest to the present argument, however, are exactly how the returns of *balikbayan* in Palaw and Santa Clara exemplified a material culture and ritual form that seemed strongly related to other practices of returning. When Jesusa’s younger brother, Dante, and his family returned from Los Angeles for Christmas in 2012, festivities included a buffet with a selection of food reserved only for special occasions, such as pasta salad with pineapple, a sweet roasted ham, and ‘*buko pandan*’ (a green gelatine dessert with strands of coconut). The porch of Jesusa’s house was decorated with a tarpaulin banner with a photograph of the family (a common practice for birthdays and other celebrations too), and when they arrived, Dante and his wife were sat down in the centre of a

circle of all Jesusa's local relatives while people unwrapped the gifts they had brought (though not in a *balikbayan* box). The circle of greeters around Dante lasted throughout the evening, and as people began to drink more beer, Dante began to make the most of the limelight, telling me (and, I got the impression, re-telling everyone else), stories about life in Los Angeles, reflecting on the changes to both countries in the twenty years he had lived in the United States, and favourably comparing his lifestyle overseas to that which most people had in the Philippines.

In other contexts, the return of migrants from overseas also precipitates a change and expansion in particular practices of consumption, for instance in Bangladesh a principal expenditure of wealthy returned migrants came in the form of lavish parties and wedding celebrations, and was also indexed by the arrival of new luxury shopping malls (Gardner 2008: 490). Such forms also occurred in Palaw and Santa Clara at the return of students to their home, when kin and friends were gathered, and the special food and decorative photographic banner were produced. Photographs of children in their graduation gowns and mortarboards were often pride of place in parents' homes, in many cases even more prominent than images of saints. Large copies of the photo would be placed within a decorative tableau on the buffet table, and the student would be expected to bring back '*pasalubong*' from the town or city where they had studied, if it was far enough away from western Batangas to be of interest. Sometimes students' '*pasalubong*' were related to their institution, including such items as stickers, stationery and clothing in the colours of the school.⁸⁵

One such celebration I attended was that thrown for Vinia. Vinia was a student at Palaw NHS who graduated in 2013, and who I contacted again in 2014 in my second stint of fieldwork. In the interim she had successfully applied to and enrolled in a computer science course at the University of Batangas, on the Nasugbu campus on the west coast of the province (her father, who worked in an office in Nasugbu for a naval haulage firm, was wealthy enough to pay for her tuition). She was a bright and confident student, whose English was impressive, and had always been very assured of her decisions to go to college after graduating. She had passed her first year exams, and had been welcomed

home during the holiday with the kind of ‘returnee’ party described above. Vinia had brought some bags of sweets back home, and was pressed eagerly on her experiences at the university by relatives, who had been invited by her parents, and who sat in a circle outside the house with her for over an hour.

Vinia had lost some of her eagerness about the possibilities of college education and the mobility it indexed, especially when she considered her separation from her mother and sister, who she missed. She maintained that she wanted to finish her education, but did admit that she felt lonely when she remembered her family (*pakiramdam kong malungkot kapag naaalala pamilya ko*). She had also decided that she definitely didn’t want to work overseas, because she couldn’t visit her family easily enough, and instead thought that she would possibly live in Manila or Batangas City, depending on where she got a job.

The significance of different kinds of returning has long been identified as important in migration studies. Douglas Massey, in looking at the overall population level networks of Mexican immigration into the United States, considers the ‘ongoing process’ of return - in which people come back to their home town either permanently or temporarily before migrating again - to one of the fundamental characteristics that perpetuates particular flows of migration: “Although Mexican migrants may be drawn north for economic reasons, they retain a strong sentimental attachment to their native culture, which is expressed in a powerful ideology of return migration” (1987: 1375). This ‘sentiment’ cannot be viewed, however, as perhaps Massey does, as a kind of primordial yearning. Rather, motivations for return can combine wistfulness, regret and nostalgia, and the acceptance of the power of the initial separation: “every immigrant knows in his heart of hearts that it is impossible to return. Even if he is physically able to return, he does not truly return, because he himself has been so deeply changed by his emigration” (Corbett 2007: 184).

Successful mobility in the perceptions of students in Batangas thus depends upon both the exoticism and excitement of travel, but also the emotional effort needed to reconcile their transformations on their return home, and also to adhere to normative narratives of migration and the life course (see Laoire 2008). The unease and disconnectedness felt when

some young people did move away from Palaw and Santa Clara limited the possibilities of this, and suggests that the way in which they oriented their expectations and aspirations changed as they moved along their anticipated life course. This experience of mobility and return in Batangas echo the way that Charles Stafford (2000; 2003; 2007) has characterised the dynamic relationship between separation and reunion in China. Separations, as performed ritualistically during festivals, between both parents and children going to work in the city and the living and their ancestors, are actually an important means by which the relationships involved are maintained and enriched:

“Relationships with ancestors, as with other spirits and also with the living, are importantly realised through the process of greeting and sending off, in spite of the fact that in some ways the continuous presence of the ancestors is also acknowledged. To not have separations and reunions, from this perspective, is to not have a relationship ... Each separation of this kind creates the possibility of a reunion, and each reunion creates the possibility of a separation.”

(Stafford 2000: 44-45)

For Stafford, the temporal structuring of the life course, particularly parent-child relations, around such moments of separation and reunion provides an overarching narrative for life that possesses a universal ‘cognitive resonance’; pulling between conflicting desires for attachment and individuality (2007: 69).

The way that the life course was perceived by those who desired a return to a *maalwang buhay* in the Philippines, also depended on a degree of continuity in certain social forms, such as socialisation with kin at the ritual celebrations of return parties, at which the separation caused by the heightened mobility of social forms could be collapsed back into a reunion. The reunion of ‘*balikbayan*’, successful graduates, and other returnees with their place of origin allows for a contextualisation of the kinds of desire and registers of aspiration that informed young people’s desire to become more mobile, and *mag-abroad* in the first place.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how the phenomenon of transnational labour migration from Batangas might be rethought in relation to other kinds of movement and mobility, and have also tried to convey a sense of the potential temporal and spatial registers through which young people imagined their entry into '*mag-abroad*'. Often distinct from a wish to enter a particular profession, planning *mag-abroad* instead indicated a person's orientation towards a far broader range of expectations: particular kinds of education, certain risks and possible rewards, unique trajectories of social and geographic mobility, and potential encounters with a wider world beyond the province where they were born. It also opened up a number of imagined futures within the realm of citizenship, sex, and the distance from one's own family in the Philippines were all considerations more or less explicitly addressed within young peoples' desire to go abroad.

The potential romance of mobility was a highly motivating and enticing factor for the students who were interested in work overseas, but the degree to which it could be realised was perhaps under-criticised. Despite the attempts, such as Josefina's, at distinguishing between the desirable and the structurally imposed foreign interaction, such oppositions are ultimately unsuccessful in separating fully the enjoyable romance of exotic foreignness from the potentially alienating practices of overseas economic migration. The excitement of travel and the allure of new and interesting social encounters - suggestive of the 'utopics' as conceived by Ness discussed in the previous chapter - fuelled by elite tourism, the return of '*balikbayan*', and other sources of exotic fantasy was allowed to overflow into the expectations of what work abroad will be like, and was especially potent where the burdens of responsibility are forcing one into the need to work abroad in the first place.

Such genres of fantasy were also gendered in significant ways, that when compared to historical forms of 'romantic' journey in Southeast Asia suggest interesting questions for the sexual politics of migration. Though traditionally the kinds of ritual travel and migration practiced by the Iban and Minangkabau were the sole undertaking of young men in search of adventure and the adulation of their families and communities, contemporary

ethnographers now note two major changes in Iban *bejalai* and Indonesian *merantau*. First, that the journeys now entirely resemble other forms of transient and temporary labour migration; and second, that mobility and migration are increasingly available to women as well as men (Postill 2006: 131).

As noted elsewhere in this thesis, the feminisation of migrant labour from the Philippines is well-documented (e.g. Parreñas 2001b). As male and female students were in many ways equally mobile, and any disparities were increasingly small, my material in this chapter demonstrates one way in which this trend suggests a shift in gender roles surrounding courtship and sex. This shift in some ways parallels the case of ‘househusbands’ left in charge of households by migrant wives, who start to expand into traditional ‘nurturer’ roles when their wives become ‘breadwinners’ (Pingol 2001: 226). However, while young women’s greater mobility was viewed as positive by most people, the particular criticisms levelled at women for having lovers in other towns - as opposed as the prestige conferred on men - suggests a lingering moral framework around the gender significance of ‘journeying’, perhaps offering another direction from which to explore the anxieties over transnational mothering explored in chapter 4.

Similar vulnerabilities were apparent in the perceptions that spatial mobility and travel contributed to almost all opportunities for future prosperity. Indeed, successful attainment of financial security and other trappings of an affluent lifestyle are premised on a particular ability to exercise one’s mobility, as J-Ray demonstrated with his decisions to move to Manila and back again. Trudy and Angel also experience the heady thrill and excitement of movement, but by contrast do so - to borrow Anne Anagnost’s phrase - “on the cusp of success and failure” (2008: 57), where the precariousness of mobility’s successes, and its costs to others, are more keenly felt. Elton, arguably, falls onto the wrong side of this cusp, and his story illuminates the parallels between physical and social (im)mobility. For him, travelling to school represented perhaps the only way in which he could access an expanded horizon that allowed contact with people beyond his remote house on the mountainside. Each commute he made became weighted with the symbolism of entering a modern and highly mobile network of new relations associated with his diverse aspira-

tional aims. The capacity to move across the landscape and beyond it became intimately bound to his ability to move across boundaries between social classes and into new kinds of social relations.

In this chapter I also examined the extent to which life in Batangas - and transnational migration from the Philippines - is better studied through a conceptual lens that privileges mobility and movement over an existing anthropological bias towards 'rootedness'. Despite the highly fluid background of constant movement and travel, I would not characterise life in Batangas 'nomadological' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 25), however. *Beginning* analysis of social relations from foundations of movement and mobility, rather than assumed 'roots' is a productive critical step, and is certainly useful in suggesting how young people in Batangas came to frame their potential migrations and future mobilities. However, doing away with roots entirely also fails to account satisfactorily for the way place and identity are constructed. This conclusion corresponds closely with that reached by Catherine Allerton with respect to Manggarai understandings of identity and place in the highlands of Flores in eastern Indonesia: mobility and movement themselves create the potential for 'stopping', and it is in their interplay that social life continues (2013: 177; c.f. Carsten 2015). The material in this chapter illustrates how understandings of temporal and spatial movement can be contingent on one another, such that doing something like moving across a landscape such as the highway to Manila is suggestive of a progression in the life course.

Using Stafford's contributions to theories of separation and reunion, I suggest that synthesising people's movements across space and time in this way shows that their navigation of and connection to particular 'rooted' places varies as their social and spatial relations change. 'Rooting' in this manner does not necessarily index stability, however, because this interplay between time and space operates in both directions: "time is lived out in changing places aligned in spatial hierarchies ... that are now as volatile as oil prices and real estate markets" (Corbett 2009: 11). '*Mag-abroad*' as an evocative category of imagination offers both a means of refusing certain kinds of rootedness in the present by emphasising the (literally) far-reaching life trajectories it entails, and allows different fan-

tasies of rerun in which rootedness can be reasserted, perhaps even created, by the collapsing of mobilities.

Conclusion

Export and Education in the Philippines

In June 2013, shortly after I completed my fieldwork, the migrant support organisation ‘Migrante International’ criticised the effects of the K+12 program legislated in 2011 and in the process of being rolled out during 2013. Migrante International’s president Garry Martinez, who I had interviewed in 2011, was unequivocal about the purpose and the effects of K+12: “[t]he real motive behind the K to 12 education system is the intensification of labour export, this time systematically targeting the country’s young labour force ... What the K to 12 system is doing is boosting cheap semi-skilled youth labour. The DepEd talks of a so-called ‘professionalisation’ of the young labour force mainly for labour markets abroad but unfortunately continues to ignore the very causes of forced migration, namely, lack of local jobs, low wages, landlessness and poor social services” (Ellao 2013).

The target of the criticism was also the labour secretary Rosalinda Baldoz, who had recently claimed that the institution of the K+12 program in line with other economic reforms within the Philippines would bring about a period of ‘reverse migration’, bringing OFWs back into the country (Santos 2013). Between this utterance and 2015, the Department of Labour and Employment’s (DOLE) emphasis when discussing the benefits of K+12 had changed somewhat, the department claiming, in June 2015, that K+12 was “the way to go to make the country’s human resource development at par with Asian and global standards” (Department of Labour and Employment 2015). Baldoz herself added “[w]e at the DOLE are unequivocal in our support to the K to 12 program because this serves as the foundational platform in creating a job-ready workforce. We support its goal to equip Filipinos to become globally competitive. It is also aligned with our efforts to make Philippine basic education at par with international curriculum and standards so that our graduates will be highly employable and ready as we join an integrated ASEAN economic community” (*ibid*).

Capitalism, Modernity and the Labour in/of Time

The persistently high profile of the K+12 policy, and its centrality to the efforts of the Philippine government to negotiate the global labour economy, demonstrates the continuing structural and ideological importance of youth and childhood within the temporal orders of capitalism. In this thesis I have argued that young people's perceptions of their futures in Batangas and beyond must be put in context of - but also (often) in opposition to - the significances attributed to them. Sue Ruddick's provocative work has captured this struggle, arguing that particular organisations of the life course must take place in order to sustain capitalism's temporal system: "[f]ar from being a by-product of industrial capitalism ... modern youth and childhood can be located at its literal and figurative core ... the need to protect and sequester young people helped to generate and justify many of the social relations associated with the rise of industrial capitalism" (2003: 337). It follows that in order to achieve this, moral and cultural discourses about youth and childhood (such as those I discuss in chapter 4) have to be nurtured: "conflicts and re-representations of the nature of youth and childhood are at the very centre of the struggle over hearts, minds and bodies in the emergence of a new globalised modernity ... what kind of youth and childhood we imagine for ourselves and our communities intersects in fundamental ways with what kind of future globalisations we will tolerate or create" (*ibid*: 357).

Answering the question of what 'tolerable future globalisations' are animates both my own ethnographic writing in this thesis and the motivations of many of the people I have written about. How 'the future' works in modern capitalism is also developing into a crucial question for anthropology, articulated recently by Laura Bear's examination of 'modern time'. It has been noted, she writes, that modern institutions create temporal regimes; theories of the "techniques of time" in modernity go back to Marx (1992 [1895]). But their hegemony is not total: rather, "institutions *mediate* divergent representations, techniques, and rhythms of human and non-human time" (emphasis in original). In this context of institutionally mediated temporalities, Bear suggests a direction for the anthropological study of it: "modern time is characterised by unprecedented doubt about, and conflict in, representations of time. Time thickens with ethical problems, impossible dilem-

mas, and difficult orchestrations. To capture this reality fully, we argue that we must focus on the labour in/of time” (2014: 6).

Where anthropologies of time have, in the past, chosen to focus their analytical lens on how people ‘shape’ their spatial-temporal surroundings and practices (Munn 1992), Bear’s insistence on the *labour in/of time* captures the way that space-time has to be wrought and wrestled with. While Bear focusses on *workers* and their contributions to various rhythms of modern time (2014: 18), labour in/of time can just as well characterise practices of schooling and learning taken on by students in Batangas. Palaw NHS and the ISA produced non-human techniques of time, from the daily timetable, up to the life course projected outwards and onwards from a successful graduation, but represented a point of ‘mediation’ of other times represented by the students’ own aspirations. Their efforts and struggles over the obstacles they confronted, and the limitations of the institutions themselves, suggest the kind of labour Bear calls a “creative act of mediation that is generative of new timespaces” (*ibid*: 20-21).

Schooling, Discipline and ‘Imitative Pedagogy’

In this thesis, I have shown how the labour in/of time constituted by schooling was seen as powerful across three registers: personal transformation of the student, generating financial security for one’s family, and contributing towards the development of the Philippines as a community and a nation-state. The extent to which this perceived power manifested in real effects is debatable. Educational outcomes at the high school were uneven, and were more successful in some areas (English, mathematics) than others. However, as I discussed in chapters 1 and 6, schooling at the ISA and the high school is undoubtedly integrated into a wider complex that produces functional qualifications, such that students who earn high school diplomas and TESDA accreditations gain access to certain kinds of capital and employment that would otherwise be inaccessible. The connection between attending school and achieving certain kinds of future was evident enough to perpetuate students’ belief in its efficacy.

I also argue, however, that these processes of accreditation produce disciplinary regimes and organisations of schooling, labour and social class found in other studies in the critical sociology of education (Freire 1970; Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Willis 1977; Giroux 1983). In Palaw NHS and the ISA more or less ‘hidden’ curricula encouraged service sector work, obedience, self-discipline, and an orientation towards work overseas through discourses of ‘global competitiveness’. My argument was not, however, that this was an entirely necessary effect of schooling under capitalism: rather, that schooling and its relationship to global capital and the relations of production in the Philippines has a particular colonial history. ‘Industrial education’ was a vital technology of colonial rule for the American administration, deployed variously in attempts to turn the islands into an agro-industrial powerhouse and in inculcating ideals of citizenship through which Filipinos would earn independence, but also had the effect of orienting educational aims and content towards ‘the foreign’. Following critical histories of the colonial and post-independence Philippines, I made the argument that the ‘tutelary’ logics (Kramer 2006: 201) of American governance, which imagined the entire colonial enterprise as a project of education and transformation of Filipinos for particular governmental and economic ends, have also persisted in post-independence policy. Critical histories of continuing American influence in the Philippines have charted how the United States’ geopolitical interests persisted after independence, influencing military, labour, and educational policy (Tadiar 2004; Bello et al 2005), and crucially also established particular flows of labour out of the Philippines (Choy 2003).

These historic structural forces contribute towards specific trends of neoliberalisation, which are identifiable through the presence of certain ideologies in Batangas, such as competitiveness (cf. Wacquant 2012). The positioning of the Philippine imagined community in comparison to wealthier, more ‘modern’ Asian neighbours, and the more explicit framing of educational success in terms of its benefits to the nation-state in this international dynamic, shifted responsibility for the Philippines’ economic success away from the state and onto the students and teachers, who had then to create a competitive ‘product’, both for comparison with other modern citizenries, and within global labour markets. ‘Foreignness’ was thus inserted into the process by which schooling was sup-

posed to ‘modernise’ Filipinos in two ways: by being both the source of an imagined pan-Asian, tiger economy identity for the Philippines, as displayed and consumed through Kumon schools, Korean novels, consumer goods from abroad, and other material cultures and media; and the imagined destination for those who successfully navigated schooling.

However, schools did not distribute the ideologies of modernity and neoliberalism uniformly or entirely successfully, and the occasionally ‘uneven’ experience of the schooling infrastructure for students, teachers and parents meant that its modernity felt incomplete or suspended. Partly this was to do with the specific failures of the state: the mismanagement and underfunding of the K+12 program presented obstructions to the ‘smooth’ exertion of its power, as did the inaccessibility of schooling for some students like Elton (see chapter 7). Students’ occasional scepticism about the efficacy of schooling and ideologies of competitiveness also manifested as ‘aspiration management’ (Davidson 2011) that excluded or mediated the possibilities of overseas labour.

Again, though, these familiar disruptions to the effects of ‘schooling’ as an institution were complicated by certain culturally specific practices. A more complex barrier to the reproduction of these ideologies in the school was the way in which pedagogy itself was seen to operate. In chapter 3, I argued that the prominence of the performative aspects of schooling, while in part a response to structural constraints, is also indicative of some understandings of precisely how education could transform both the student and society. In an educational setting, practices of ‘imitative pedagogy’ such as the STEP pageant were informed by a particular history and cultural resonance of the power of performances of imitation and emulation as described in the work of Fenella Cannell (1999) and Mark Johnson (1997). The expectation that education would translate into wealth, status and the trappings of certain ‘other’ kinds of lives (wealthy businesspeople, foreigners) was partly achieved through the forms of appropriation that imitation was understood to elicit.

In Vicente Rafael’s extensive histories of the role of English language speech in schools, politics and everyday life in the Philippines (1995, 2015), he describes how mistransla-

tion and play with language demonstrates the subversive potential of this kind of interaction between the students and a source of 'foreign' potency. Rafael also notes that, in Rizal's '*clase de fisica*' (2011 [1891]; Rafael 2006: 45-46), the constant possibility of students' failure was profoundly threatening to the ideological purposes of the school, and in what I have called 'imitative pedagogy' similar dynamics arose in Batangas. By reconfiguring the hegemonic imposition of 'foreign' symbols and regimes of practice according to a different theory of power and influence, students were able to domesticate and disarm elements of neoliberal ideology such as professionalism, competition, and social mobility.

In this sense my arguments contribute towards a body of work on the anthropology of education that complicates (but does not deny) the effects of neoliberalism on its practice. In a recent review essay, Amy Stambach summarises a growing (and optimistic) sentiment in the ethnography of schooling, namely that "education ultimately can - and should - transcend and supersede the state and market. Education is a relational activity. It involves interactions among people. As such, education is never simply about indoctrinating students to ideas of the state, nor about socialising students into a market economy" (Stambach 2012: 331). The relational aspects of education - between teachers and students, students and the state, the Philippines and 'the foreign' - have been emphasised in this thesis, providing another theoretical direction from which to approach the classic debates of cultural (re)production. Even an engagement with a 'state apparatus' (Althusser 1971) such as the school necessarily creates a space in which the apparatus itself might be changed, manipulated, or avoided.

Transnationalism, Kinship and Childhood

Another important argument of this thesis is that the institution of education, and the relations of which it is composed, extends beyond the school and explicitly pedagogical interactions. The idioms of responsibility, care and obligation that inform students' relationships with parents and other kin are often expressed in terms of the expected outcomes of schooling in the future, and the cost of schooling in the present. However, the 'affective economy' surrounding who pays for schooling, and how young people experience the

varying expressions of indebtedness that this produces, is not only an important part of intergenerational relationships within families, but also beyond them.

In chapters 4 and 5, I argued that schooling's position as a fertile source of imaginaries of personal, societal and national futures lends both it and young people as students huge significance in the politics of social reproduction. Central to such politics is the moral value ascribed to children as crucial to understandings of successful kinship, and to *ka-bataan* as both politically volatile and vulnerable to influences which would cause social reproduction to fail. I argue that such conceptions of childhood and social reproduction mirror findings in the wider anthropology of kinship in Southeast Asia, which has regularly emphasised the importance of creating children for solidifying modes of relatedness oriented towards the future (e.g. Carsten 1995b), and also that - following sociologies of children and childhood (Pugh 2009; Zelizer 1985, 2010) - these conceptions are historically contingent and influenced by political ideology.

The interventions of the PFW and the BCCM into the moral discourse surrounding childhood and youth point towards new fields of contestation over the meaning of 'family' in the Philippines. Reynaldo Ileto's provocative essay (1999) on the pernicious orientalism of much American political science on the Philippines criticised, amongst many other targets, Alfred W. McCoy's condemnation of the Philippines' 'native' political institutions as dominated by oligarchies and factional clans (1993). In essence, McCoy's critique is an example of the modernising trope identified by McKinnon & Cannell (2013), in that he objects to the failure to successfully distinguish the domains of politics and kinship. McKinnon & Cannell demonstrate that the process of 'purification' implicit in trends of modernisation or secularisation cannot ever be successful, even in contexts that are supposedly already-modern (*ibid*: 36-37); in chapters 4 and 5 I argue in favour of this conclusion for the Philippines. To explore the intertwining of kinship relations with both money economies and political inequalities I used an analysis that foregrounded the position of children. The experiences of the PFW scholars, the *katulong* and others in receipt of certain kinds of patronage clearly demonstrates the centrality of money to the production of kinship relations, and the ease with which political hierarchy, relations of indebt-

edness and idioms of inequality manifested within relations also animated by kinship and affect suggest the same conclusions.

A second strand to this part of my argument addresses the significance of increasing transnationalism for the ideological construction of family. Part of what my focus on children and childhood reveals are the strategies by which transnational families are being reincorporated into the realm of 'legitimate' kinship. The work of Rhacel Parreñas, Filomeno V. Aguilar and Deirdre McKay is beginning to describe how this transformation of legitimate kinship is occurring. McKay's concept of the 'virtual village' shows how technological developments such as mobile phones and online communication is allowing the expansion of 'community' networks into transnational spaces through the construction of shared narratives (2012). These are not necessarily *new* kinds of social organisation, rather they constitute the historical changes and fluctuations in existing forms of affective relations. My own usage of Parry & Bloch's theory of 'contaminated money' (1989) to demonstrate the discursive moral power of directing remittances towards children, youth and education also suggests a means by which the ideological disjunctures caused by increasing mobility are being addressed within existing frameworks of patronage.

This kind of description of the complex and subtle interactions with transnational flows of concepts, capital and power *within* the Philippines suggest ways of writing anthropologies of transnationalism when the actors are those who are only potentially or incompletely implicated in its flow. I have highlighted how these flows integrate with or contest existing relations (sometimes with geographic registers of their own) within the Philippines, such as the confluences between 'foreignness', modernity and urbanisation (see chapter 2). A similar confluence occurs when 'utopic' ideas of the Philippines and the 'tourate' workforce (Ness 2003) it creates overflow into ideas of the kind of aspirational worker who works overseas (as discussed in chapter 6), or when the romance of mobility and travel is extrapolated into desires and hopes for transnational migration (chapter 7). My argument, however, does not assume that the effects these combinations of ideology have on students and their place within labour economies are necessarily benign. As indicated by the fact that labour from the Philippines is increasingly feminised (Parreñas 2001b;

Tadiar 2004; Piper & Yamanaka 2008: 161), engaging with these ideologies forces students to negotiate forces that reduce them to particular kinds of racial and sexual capital, as the HRM and HRS students did at the ISA through their navigation of *bakla* bodily discipline, language and practice.

Mobility, Youth and Intergenerationality

As with ‘imitative pedagogy’ and its orientations towards ‘others’ such as Asian modernities and *Manileño* elites, I argue that when students interacted with these ideologies, they were engaged in attempts at ‘domestication’ of the kinds of power they suggest. The ambiguities of attempts at the ‘domestication’ of global capital were exemplified by the contestations over ‘migrant mansions’, land purchase and changing forms of house in Palaw, as I discussed in chapter 2. I argued that the hybridisation of urban and rural forms were an only partially successful attempt at mediating the alienating and de-socialising effects of aggressive modernities such as subdivision property developments. Similarly, I have argued that the Palaw Foundation Worldwide negotiated its situation within global capital with some ambiguity. Because of the close articulation that persists between education and transnational migration, the money raised by the PFW and reabsorbed by the education system undermined the organisation’s attempts to ‘isolate’ the Philippines and prevent its reliance on remittances. The intergenerational dynamics at play at once assert and undermine the moral orders of parenting, the family, and the threat of a ‘delinquent’ *ka-bataan* generation.

Though I concluded in chapter 2, in agreement with Eric Thompson, that an awareness of the specificity of ideological articulations of urbanism and modernity is vital (2007: 12), I also demonstrated in this thesis how the interaction of spatial and temporal ideologies conjures powerful effects, and deploying analysis capable of simultaneously addressing geographies and temporalities can be very productive. In chapter 7, my focus on mobility incorporates both the significances of movement and motion across the landscape of Batangas and beyond, and the understandings of such actions across time and into the future. My argument draws on anthropologies of place and space that question concepts of personhood and identity as grounded in a single location (Malkki 1992; Allerton 2013),

and uses them to question whether life course trajectories might also be bounded along similar ideological lines.

This returns my discussion to the work on time and youth with which I began my conclusion. I have argued that the immanence of ‘futuraity’ (Jenks 1996) in the everyday practice of young people in the Philippines is cemented by the simultaneous orientation towards educational transformation and the possibilities and potentials of ‘*nag-aabroad*’. However, these conditions are merely catalysts of a far broader and exploratory genre of imagined futures, which encompass a wide range of different trajectories along the life course. These are not without limitations, however, and throughout this thesis I have referred to the weight in the present of money from abroad, kinship obligations, and encounters with the nation-state that all structure this repertoire of ‘*pangarap*’ (dreams). This structuring also takes place within the context of Philippine histories of youth and intergenerational politics (Rafael 2000), for instance those surrounding the *barkada* as a particularly volatile but also youth-oriented form of kinship (see chapter 5).

The significance of structuring effects on young people’s lives, and the primacy of interactions and relations with others to understandings of their social roles, stimulates my final argument. Understanding young people’s particular articulation to the labour in/of time in schools could be described simply in terms of their particular agency in relation to these structures. However, it is far more productive to consider how their attempts to work on their futures against certain countervailing structural entities represented just part of a wide complex of encounters across unequal gradients, many of which manifested as social relations across generational boundaries.

This represents a slight revision of existing methodologies and theories in the anthropology of childhood. Allison James and Alan Prout’s influential “emergent paradigm” of childhood studies (1997), which stressed childhood’s constructedness and particularity, and young people’s independence and self-determination, correctly advocated the meaningful inclusion of children and their worlds into ethnography and demonstrated how the potentially unique perspectives of children cannot be left out of holistic social analysis.

But this change in focus can obscure as well as reveal the lives of young people, who inevitably exist within worlds shaped by cultural and social forces beyond those belonging to and controlled by children (Cole & Durham 2008: 21). While understanding the ways in which children can be autonomous social agents is vital, an overemphasis on establishing that children possess agency of their own has the potential to obscure the structural constraints they face, and mystifies the means by which children are rendered vulnerable, dominated or exploited. Further, as James has pointed out, “the very conceptualisation of, variously, ‘the voices of children’ or ‘children’s voices’ risks glossing over the diversity of children’s own lives and experiences” (James 2007: 262).

A similar vein of critique contends that, by removing adults, anthropologies of childhood fail to reflect the lived reality of children’s lives, in which older people are almost always present in one form or another. This may well be as remote or obscured ‘others’ - such as police or officials - who exist at a remove from the interactive social worlds of young people. More likely, though, it is as family members, friends or colleagues whose presences in children’s lives represent meaningful social relations and constitute a significant portion of their social interactions. To accommodate this more complex rendering of the categories of youth, childhood, and age, and to demonstrate their historical and cultural variability, I have argued in this thesis that the study of children, youth and childhood requires a theoretical underpinning that appreciates not only the ways in which young people’s identities and perspectives are often expressed and practiced through intergenerational relations, but also that generations as the sociological constructs of informants and researchers are highly fluid entities (Kertzer 1983). In Batangas, understanding migration - how its potentialities actually manifest, the ways in which schoolchildren learn to become OFWs, how future migrants are created - also requires an understanding of generations.

Appendix 1: Figures 2-8

Anong gusto mong trabaho kapag nakatapos ka na nang pag-aaral? (What job do you want after you finish studying?)	n	%
Police Officer	21	10.94%
Chef	20	10.42%
Seafarer	12	6.25%
Teacher	12	6.25%
Businessperson	9	4.69%
Engineer (Computer)	9	4.69%
Engineer	8	4.17%
Accountant	6	3.13%
Hotel/Restaurant	5	2.60%
Nurse	5	2.60%
Engineer (Automotive)	4	2.08%
Engineer (Electrical)	4	2.08%
Architect	3	1.56%
Secretary	3	1.56%
Soldier	3	1.56%
Doctor	2	1.04%
Engineer (Mechanical)	2	1.04%
Minister	2	1.04%
Pilot	2	1.04%
Stewardess	2	1.04%
Call Centre Agent	1	0.52%
Designer	1	0.52%
Lawyer	1	0.52%
Optician	1	0.52%
Programmer/Developer	1	0.52%
Tour Guide	1	0.52%
[To help my family]	13	6.77%
[Any good job]	8	4.17%
[Big Company]	5	2.60%
[High salary]	1	0.52%
[Don't know]	3	1.56%
[No answer]	22	11.46%
Total	192	100.00%

Figure 2 (Results of survey of students, aged 14-17, in fourth year at Palaw National High School in 2012)

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Figure 3 (Gawad Kalinga community. Photo credit: Gawad Kalinga, photo retrieved from <http://www.nyers-for-the-philippines.com/our-beneficiary/>)



Figure 4 (Large house in Kanluran subdivision)



Figure 5 (Rusted signpost in Kanluran subdivision)



Figure 6 (Houses in the Co-op Subdivision)



Figure 7 (Chapel of the Señor, Santa Clara)



Figure 8 (Mr & Ms STEP 2012 trophies, certificates and sashes)

Appendix 2: Glossary & Acronyms

A Note on Plurals

In Tagalog, as with many other languages in the Philippines, nouns are pluralised adding the particle ‘*mga*’ before the word, such that, for instance, *barangay* becomes *mga barangay*. Where I have needed to pluralise words in the text, adding the particle has often proved clumsy, and so I have mostly treated Tagalog nouns as irregular plurals that have the same singular and plural form (e.g. sheep). This has been for ease of reading and comprehension, and I hope readers will forgive my improvised ‘Taglish’.

adobo	meat, seafood or vegetables cooked in soy sauce and vinegar
ALS	Alternative Learning System
anak	offspring
aplikasyon	application
asal	behaviour
aswang	vampire-like mythical creature
ate	elder sister
awa	pity
babae	woman
bading	gay (derogatory)
bagong bayani	modern-day heroes
bahay	house
bahay kubo	square house
bahay na bato	stone house
baka	water buffalo meat
bakla	cross-dressing man
balikbayan	home-comer
bangus	milkfish
bansa	country
barangay	neighbourhood or community, the smallest administrative division
barkada	friendship group
barong	collared shirt, traditionally made from piña
bata	child
bato	boring
bayan	town/community/nation/people
bawal	forbidden
BCCM	Batangas Church Commission for Migrants
BEI	Board of Election Inspectors
benepisyo	benefit/good

BSU	Batangas State University
buhay	life
bulalo	bone marrow soup
bukid	countryside
buko	shredded immature coconut
buko pandan	green gelatine dessert with strands of coconut
bumili	buy
bundok	mountain/remote countryside
bunso	younger sibling
busog	full
CALABARZON	Administrative region containing the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon
capiz	thin, white oyster shell used to make window panes
carozza	mobile pedestal for a saint's image
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CHAMPSEA	Child Health and Migrant Parents in South-East Asia
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
dahilan	reason
damit	clothes
DepEd	Department of Education
dirihi	supervision/guidance
disiplina	discipline
DOLE	Department of Labour and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Work and Development
edukasyon	education
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
estudyante	student
ginulo	distracted
green-minded	dirty-minded
Hallyu	Korean media and culture exported to other Asian countries
Hapon	Japan
henerasyon	generation
hinaharap	future
hingin	ask
hiya	shame
HRM	Hotel and Restaurant Management
HRS	Hotel and Restaurant Service
iba	different
ilustrado	late nineteenth-century wealthy intelligentsia in the Philippines
importante	important

interbyu	interview
ISA	International Science Academy
jeepney	public transport vehicle, styled on converted military jeeps
Jolibee	Filipino fast-food restaurant chain
kaalaman	experience
kabataan	youth
kabuhayan	livelihood
kaeksaktuhan	punctual
kahirapan	difficulties
kaibigan	friend
kaldareta	meat and tomato stew
kaloob	gift
kamag-anak	relatives
kambing	goat
kampings	camping trip
kapatid	sibling
kape	coffee
kapwa	development
katulong	helper/maid
kaugnayan	relevance
kawal	soldier
kawit-kawit	collective relatedness
kinabukasan	future
kikiam	squid balls
klase	class
kolehiyo	college
komunidad	community
Koreanovela	soap opera set in Korea
kultura	culture
kumare/kupare	godmother/godfather
kumpanya	company
kumpunihin	renovated
kuya	elder brother
lakbay	journey
lalaki	man
libre	free
lola/o	grandmother/grandfather
loob	inside
luma	old (object)
lumpia	spring roll-like fried pastry
lungsod	city

pupa	land
ma-drama	dramatic
maalala	remember
maalwang	comfortable
maarte	artistic/glamorous
maayos	secure
mabagal	slow
mabasa	read
mabato	turn to stone
mabuhay	welcome
mabuti	good/better
madala	bring/carry
madula	theatrical
mag-abroad	go abroad
mag-alaga	care
mag-aral	study
mag-gising	wake up
mag-ingat	take care
mag-praktis	practice
maganda	beautiful
magbisita	visit
magkita	meet
magsuot	wear
magtangka	try
magturo	teach
magulang	parent
mahiram	borrow
mahiya	embarrassed
mahusay	good
mahusay na pagsasalita	well-spoken
maipagmamalaki	pride
makabago	up-to-date
makinig	listen
makipagkompetensiya	ability to compete
malakas	strong
malaki	big
malaking kumpanya	big business
malapit	close
malayo	far/distant
malilim	deep
malinis	clean

malungkot	lonely/sad
manaig	prevail/overcome
Manileño	from or of Manila
mapagod	tired
mapawis	sweat
masaya	happy
masigasig	enthusiastic
mataas	high/tall
matalino	intelligent/clever
matambay	hanging out
matanda	adult/old (person)
matindi	deeper
matulong	helping
matupad	fulfil/realise
matuto	learn
maumid	shy
mawalis	sweep
meryenda	afternoon snacks
mestizo/a	of both Spanish and Filipino descent
meykap	make-up
migrante	migrant
moderno	modern
multo	ghost
mumurahin	cheap
mundo	world
nakahiwalay	separate
nanay	mother
NHS	National High School
nipa	elevated bamboo hut
NPA	New People's Army
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
OJT	On-the-Job Training
opisina	office
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
pag-unlad	development
pagdating ng araw	future
paggalang	respect
pagkakataon	opportunity
paglalayo	estrangement
pagpapahalaga	values/respect
pagpapakatao	humanity/being human

pagsasanay	exercise
pakikisama	sociability/hospitality
pakiramdam	sensitivity
palabas	show/perform/pageant
pamilya	family
pamahiin	superstition
pangarap	dream
pare-pare	regular
pasalubong	small gift/souvenir
pasatiyempo	free time
pasok	go to work or school (lit. enter)
pastillas	milk candy
patintero	game similar to tag
pera	money
PFW	Palaw Foundation Worldwide
PHP	Philippine Peso
Pinay/oy	colloquial form of Filipina/o
pinsan	cousin
piña	fabric made from pineapple leaf fibres
poblasyon	town centre
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
pogi	handsome (of a man/boy)
porener	foreigner
presko	fresh
problema	problem
propesyonalismo	professionalism
prosesyon	procession
pulitiko	politician
purok	subdivision of a barangay/hamlet
puso	heart
putt	steamed rice cake
pyesta	fiesta/town celebration
responsibilidad	responsibility
restawran	restaurant
sabay-sabay	evenly distributed
sahod	wage
sakada	sugar cropper
saknungan	community assistance
salakot	wide, conical hat worn by agricultural labourers
sama-sama	together
sangguinang kabataan	youth council

santo	saint
santuhan	ceremony devoted to saints' images
sari-sari	convenience store (lit. variety)
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
sermonita	short lecture, delivered by a priest
sikolohiya	psychology
sinulat	write
siomai	steamed dumpling
siopao	steamed bunn
STEP	Student Technologists and Entrepreneurs of the Philippines
STL	Small Town Lottery
subdiv	subdivision/gated community
suki	customer
supot	uncircumcised
suweldo	salary
suwerte	lucky
taga-bukid	farmers/peasants
tagay	drinking circle
tahimik	quiet
taho	syrup and ice
talubata	teenager
tanga	fool
tanong	question
tatay	father
terno	suit/dress with 'butterfly' sleeves
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
tikbalang	centaur-like mythical creature
titser	teacher
tiya/o	aunt/uncle
TLE	Technology and Livelihood Education
totoo	real/true
trabaho	work/job
tradisyonal	traditional
trapolitics	career politician
tubo	sugar plant
tunay	real
ulirang	model/perfect
umamin	admit
UP	University of the Philippines
UST	University of Santo Tomas
utang	debt

utang na loob	sense of indebtedness (lit. debt of the inside)
uwi	go home
videoke	television playing accompanying music and lyrics on a screen
yaya	domestic worker employed as maid, nanny, and cook
yumaman	wealthy

Notes

¹ I have used some pseudonyms for people and places in this thesis to protect the identity of my informants.

² Students usually enrolled aged 16 or 17, immediately after secondary school, and graduated aged 20 or 21, but many students had not enrolled until their early twenties, when they had saved enough money, or wanted to change their job. The oldest student I knew was 30.

³ For an extensive critique of these modernisation narratives, see Rakopoulos (2012: 66-67).

⁴ In addition, there are over 8.8 million more private school students at the secondary and elementary levels.

⁵ Though Rafael also points out numerous occasions in which the catechistic education and conversion of Tagalogs had unforeseen and frustrating consequences for the Spanish mission.

⁶ The entirety of Emma Blair and James Alexander Robertson's colossal *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* must be read with a critical eye, due to the use of the work to legitimise certain aspects of the American colonial project (Cano 2008).

⁷ See Cannell (1999: 3-9) and chapter 7 of this thesis for an account of the problematic deployment of the ethno-geographic terms 'highland' and 'lowland' in Philippine history.

⁸ This fair was far from the first at which propaganda detailing the successes of schooling in the Philippines had been displayed. In 1904, the St Louis World's Fair housed a large exhibit on the Philippines, a principal attraction of which was a 'model school,' occupied by star pupils and taught by Pilar Zamora, the only Filipino teacher trainer in the Philippines. The students aptitude in English was held up as evidence of the rapid success of schooling in the Philippines, and also as proof of the United States' benevolent intentions (Vostral 1993).

⁹ The orientation of the Philippines towards the United States also took on a cultural, even nationalistic, dynamic. For children brought up since 1898, the experience of schooling was dominated by the presence (both ideological and sometimes - in the case of American teachers - personal) of the United States. Regardless of the economic imperatives, the propagation of American nationalism in the Philippines - such as saluting the flag and singing 'My Country, 'Tis of Thee' - undoubtedly precipitated the beginnings of the large trans-Pacific migrations that occurred throughout the twentieth century (Fujita-Rony 2003: 53-54).

¹⁰ Although the Great Depression caused a dip, several thousand workers were repatriated, even the Tydings-McDuffie Act, passed in 1934, which limited the number of Filipinos who could enter the United States legally to fifty per year, was circumvented through a Hawaiian exemption, lobbied for by the HSPA (Buenaventura 1996: 75-76).

¹¹ Such programs were also present earlier in the American colonial period for teachers, though were not as extensive or long lasting (Coloma 2009: 509).

¹² The powerful effect of this history can be seen in the contemporary Philippine state's practice of 'marketing' Filipino workers' 'productive femininity' in the global labour marketplace (Guevarra 2010: 125; Rodriguez 2010: 52) and 'training' female migrants in pre-migration preparatory courses, which rigorously police racialised 'feminine' attributes (Rodriguez 2010: 84).

¹³ When teachers and students would pass comment on the lack of resources their school enjoyed - a complaint I return to elsewhere in this thesis - a laundry list of problems or desired materials would often be appended with the ironic coda: "*Eh, may libreng aircon na naman*" (at least there is free air-con).

¹⁴ It is necessary to point out that coordinated dancing was not unique to schools in the Philippines: during my fieldwork I experienced dance sessions with church groups, youth groups, political party rallies, sporting events, and even with the employees of a corporate office. The most notorious examples of this practice are those performed by inmates in a Visayan prison, a practice excellently dissected by Aine Mangaoang (2013).

¹⁵ Throughout this thesis, I refer to female teachers with the honorific 'Ma'am', as this was how they were addressed by students. Male teachers' names are given the honorific 'Mr', as the term 'Sir', which was used by students before the name, read somewhat strangely when translated into English text.

¹⁶ Perhaps surprisingly, no connection was made to me during my fieldwork between contemporary ‘Japanese’ influence on ideal schooling practices and the WWII-era control exerted by the Japanese over the schooling system in the Philippines. This was symptomatic of a disjunct in popular imaginations of Japan: now part of the ‘ASEAN’ and wider East Asian international community, of which the Philippines was considered an equal member; rather than the imperial head of the ‘Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere’, an attempt to incorporate the Philippines and other western Pacific and East Asian nations into a Japanese Empire.

¹⁷ In Palaw and Santa Clara, even the ‘international’ schools did not have foreign teachers – a luxury to be found, in popular perception, only in the most expensive private schools in Manila. In this sense, the landscape of schooling is slightly different from that found by Nick Long in Riau, Indonesia, where there was a similar comparison of failing local schools with those of “international standard”, but where some of the private schools employed their own Singaporean staff (2011: 51).

¹⁸ I return to Long’s case for further comparison to my own experience of pageants in Batangas in chapter 3.

¹⁹ As I discuss in chapter 7, English language ability does have an impact on some of the ISA students’ success in finding work overseas and transnationally, as it is perceived as a particular skill of Filipinos amongst other workers from Southeast Asia (cf. Constable 2013: 180).

²⁰ While all of this may give the impression that a particularly potent ‘hidden curriculum’ was at work, directing students towards menial labour, it should be noted that the practice of younger people performing errands for those older than themselves is far from unusual in the Philippines, where grown-ups will regularly ask small children to perform minor tasks. Such practices index complex hierarchical relations that many have argued characterise Tagalog society (see discussions of ‘*utang na loob*’ elsewhere in this thesis), but I suggest that hierarchical relations between teachers and students have additional aspects, an argument I explore in chapters 2 and 4.

²¹ It is worth noting that the production of ‘artisanal’ and ‘craft’ items for export is still being touted as a means by which the Philippines civic and economic ‘development’ can be promoted, as well as a means for the emancipation of women by encouraging the operation of small businesses (Milgram 2000).

²² The steaks were sold to restaurants and to events organisers for the wealthy. An extremely luxurious good, steak was not a common part of most Filipino diets, even the wealthy elite. As pasture animals are uncommon in the Philippines, ‘*baka*’, usually translated as beef, actually comes from the meat of young water buffalo. Even this, used in dishes such as ‘*kaldareta*’ (meat stew) and ‘*bulalo*’ (bone marrow soup) were not regular dishes in houses in Batangas, as the buffalo were most commonly used for labour.

²³ Most of the small number of workers I had contact with in Bulaklak had migrated from the provinces at some point in their lives, and still had family living outside of Metro Manila. Some employees lived here permanently, though, such as the gardener for several houses in the ‘village’, including that of my hosts. Others, including my hosts’ ‘*yaya*’ (a multi-talented maid, nanny, and cook), had a family in the provinces that she would spend 3 months of the year with. The remaining 9 months were spent in the temporary staff lodgings in the ‘village’.

²⁴ ‘*Gawad kalinga*’ is usually translated as ‘give care’, but ‘*gawad*’ can also be translated as ‘grant’ or even ‘bestow’.

²⁵ ‘*Desakota*’ is a portmanteau of the Bahasa Indonesia words ‘*desa*’ (city) and ‘*kota*’ (village).

²⁶ Such practice, where construction and augmentation was almost always carried out with an eye on ‘modernisation’ (*paggawa ng makabago*), is distinct from other means of rendering the house emblematic of the situatedness of the family. Joao de Pina-Cabral documents how Portuguese emigrants reinvesting money earned away from home triggered a boom in the local construction industry (1986: 13), but directed funds towards reinforcing traditional construction styles and conceptions of the ‘*casa*’ as site of relatedness and connection to land. As such, references by migrants to their houses back home always have “both people and the land in mind” (1984: 78).

²⁷ While Zialcita & Tinio refer to the *bahay na bato* as the Philippines’ ‘ancestral home’, it is important to point out that even in the nineteenth century, this would have been the kind of house available to a tiny elite (Lorente 1982: 127).

²⁸ Such houses exert a different kind of pressure on imaginations of nostalgic Filipino nationhood. The category of *ilustrado*, as demonstrated by Caroline Hau, is contemporarily deployed as a means of both authenticating claims to tradition and undermining elite nationalisms as inauthentic (2011: 23–27).

²⁹ Locally, both developments were referred to as ‘*subdiv*’, though I have named them for ease of differentiation in my description.

³⁰ While the Philippines was not affected as badly as Thailand or other east Asian boom economies by the property bubble of the 1990s (Sicat 1998; Noland 2000), it is hard to analyse the overgrown pavements and rusted street signs of Kanluran without recourse to such macroeconomic effects on housing demand.

³¹ Examples of the spiritual peril of empty or silent spaces and the need to fill them with noise are to be found in other ethnographic literatures on Southeast Asia (Cannell 1999: 153, 159; Allerton 2007: 18-19; 2013: 54-55)

³² In some accounts of vacant lots in subdivisions elsewhere in southern Luzon, residents had taken to growing vegetables and fruits, such as bananas, on the empty patches of grass. However, this usage did not sit within existing social and economic systems of farming and land use, and was only of a scale that it constituted a hobby or pass-time for the wealthy residents (Ortega 2012: 256-257). In Palaw, this was more strictly policed, and the Co-op residents were nervous about breaking their deeds of restriction, which governed things like extending their properties and using the land surrounding their house.

³³ My material here relies on other sources, as during my own fieldwork in Palaw and Santa Clara, I did not encounter teachers who were particularly active as poll inspectors during elections, possibly because of the reputation the work had for being dangerous. One teacher did tell me that they actively attempted to leave the province during elections, due to the pressure and attention that even teachers who were not involved with COMELEC could receive.

³⁴ Mr Reynald is a member of the Iglesia ni Cristo church, a practice of which is the deliberate non-observance of Catholic ceremonies. He had sat outside during the prayer, and did not participate in passing by the deceased, either.

³⁵ Those who were congregants of the Pentecostal church, or especially the Iglesia ni Cristo church, meanwhile used the absence of saints from their devotion as a principal means by which they could distinguish themselves and their denomination.

³⁶ Other histories recounted to me, including by representatives of the local church administration, suggested a period of dereliction during the Japanese occupation. As histories of the image involved a good deal of being moved (and moving) around to different locations, the idea that the family had maintained the chapel throughout its history seemed unlikely.

³⁷ This need again mirrors accounts from elsewhere in Southeast Asia, where houses have been described as ‘biographical’ (Telle 2007), architecturally mapping changes in the relatedness and success or failure of the family, and in some senses having animate qualities or ‘living’ (Waterson 1990)

³⁸ While Department of Education funding for the province of Batangas was - in principle - apportioned equally among municipal boards of education, each responsible for funding schools in their district, some of this money was ‘redistributed’ among other municipal budgets. Schools were often reliant on community fundraising and volunteerism in order to pay for or provide classroom equipment, maintenance and repairs. These practices were embedded in a range of relationships between teachers as public figures and the Department of Education’s local representatives.

³⁹ It should be recognised that, with the introduction of the K+12 curriculum in the latter stages of my fieldwork, the TLE curriculum has changed somewhat. However, the emphasis on vocational skills has continued, even expanded, and the ‘co-curricular’ activities of STEP have continued, though not in Palaw NHS.

⁴⁰ I was nervous not only about the general ethical implications of my sitting at the judges table, deciding on these categories, but also specifically about making misinformed or insensitive judgements. I did attempt to sidestep some of these concerns by looking over the shoulder of the other judges and copying the their marks.

⁴¹ The translation here, and in Dancel’s statement, of *pangarap* into ‘dream’ is suggestive in English of a desire that will always be somewhat intangible, or at the very least unrealistic. The use of *pangarap* differs from this slightly, in that dreams were often to describe an *expected* destination in one’s future, as opposed to a speculative one, and dreams while sleeping were often interpreted as having predictive power, for instance warning of future peril, such as a road accident on an upcoming journey, or directing the dreamer to good fortune. The expression of ‘*pangarap*’ in the way that Dancel and Frank use it here was even in some senses a means by which these futures could become true through force of will - ‘believing in ones dreams’ was a common refrain in popular culture, not least in narratives surrounding educational transformation, and in beauty pageants.

⁴² See Manalansan (2003: 45) for an account of a gay beauty pageant in New York, USA, and Nagy (2008) on 'Miss Philippines Bahrain'.

⁴³ The term *bakla* is often glossed as 'gay' in the literature, and was rendered this way when my informants would translate the term. However, neither 'gay' nor classifications such as 'third sex' manage to retain the specific historical and political significance of *bakla* in the Philippines (Garcia 1996), though in this chapter I follow my informants in switching between this term and 'gay'.

⁴⁴ Taussug word for *bakla*.

⁴⁵ The performance of international cosmopolitanism is also not restricted to the contestants alone, as Johnson elsewhere notes the proliferation of 'international' competitions such as 'Miss Gay Super Model (of the World)' (1996: 90-91) in small-scale communities featuring only local entrants.

⁴⁶ Errington's 'potency' refers to Benedict Anderson's conceptualisation of power in ancient Southeast Asia as "that intangible, mysterious and divine energy that animates the universe", which is concrete (non-abstract), homogenous, constant (non-extendable or irreducible), and beyond legitimation (1972: 22-23).

⁴⁷ Comparison between the deployment of the laptops as objects and anting-anting described by Ileto as talismans of power is tempting. Ileto describes the anting-anting used by the Katipuneros and likely dating back further into the Tagalog history as objects somehow imbued with potency by proximity to sources of (often religious) power, then taken away to transfer such power to their new owners (1979: 22-27): "it is also expected that a man of power surround himself with objects and persons held to have unusual power ... the proximity of these objects and persons enabled the ruler to absorb some of their power" (1979: 24-25). Laptops, imbued with such power by their association with the modernity of *malaking kumpanya* (big business) potentially offered such a means by which power could flow to the performers. I am hesitant in making this argument however, as to suggest the continuity of a conceptual system from nineteenth-century Tagalog revolutionaries to contemporary Batangueño students risks de-historicising the cultural and political forces at play in each case. Nevertheless, this aside suggests some further evidence for my own theoretical usage of the concept of *loob* via the work of Anderson, Ileto, Rafael and Cannell.

⁴⁸ A number of ethnographic and historical studies of the expression and ideological construction of Filipino nationalism in the twentieth century have examined the role played by photographs; these include the consolidation of nationalistic ideals by the bourgeois *ilustrados* (Rafael 2000: 100), their significance for anthropological technologies of racial classification and 'display' (such as census-taking) by the American colonial government (Vergara 1995; Rafael 2000: 37-39; Kramer 2006: 237).

⁴⁹ Undoubtedly the rhetoric surrounding the *balikbayan* (lit. 'return home') class of migrant workers who, rather than working temporarily overseas, emigrate permanently then come home to visit, follows the same logic of class legitimacy (see chapter 7).

⁵⁰ From the high school students' perspective, the office management students at the tertiary college represented the most accessible example of 'businesswear' in Batangas (see chapter 6), though the elite property tycoons and businessmen and women who regularly appeared in the story lines of telenovelas also offered inspiration.

⁵¹ It is still the case that voices within critical pedagogy and the history of education in the Philippines scholars still tend to analyse English language teaching as only ever detrimental to Filipinos and the Philippine national identity (e.g. Tupas 2003, 2008, 2009).

⁵² Although the usual description offered to me of the Philippines' national wealth would include its 'abundant' workforce, here Mr Joseph was talking about *natural* resources. Also occurring in other conversations about the national economy, the understanding was that government inefficiencies and corruption prevented the successful extraction and exploitation of vast mineral deposits, high quality timber and even oil. This kind of understanding of the value of the Philippines' resources (which, while not shared by everyone, would have been familiar to most) is arguably optimistic (commodity exports from the Philippines are dominated by agricultural products and manufactured goods) (Philippine Statistics Authority 2015b), but still contributed to lamentations over an economic dependence on remittances, examples of which I describe later in this chapter.

⁵³ Residents of Palaw itself had been sending international labour migrants abroad for over 30 years, and while over half of my student respondents at the public high school there said that there is a migrant labourer in their family, I estimate that the number - and economic impact - of overseas labour is not as high as in some other areas of Batangas (see introduction), such as those near to Lipa City, Batangas City, and the Mabini peninsula in the east of the province. This demographic variation is offered to provide some context of the different environment in and scale at which the PFW and the commission in Lipa operate.

⁵⁴ The limitation of club membership to couples was inspired by the a version of an origin myth for the Filipino people, in which a man and a woman (usually called '*malakas*', or strong, and '*maganda*', or 'beautiful', but in Bertie's version named 'Tulume' - a kind of roguish everyman hero in popular culture - and 'Patrice') emerged from a bamboo stalk and walked out of the forest to start the first family, from which all other Filipinos are descended. Vicente Rafael (2000: 122-123) has noted the appropriation of this myth by the Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos: they had large paintings commissioned of themselves as '*maganda*' and '*malakas*' emerging from the bamboo.

⁵⁵ Though Jesusa did not use this word, her sentiment matches very closely to the Batangueño idiom of '*saknungan*', or 'community help' (Bankoff 2007: 338-339), which implies cooperation and aid to ones peers, but also references incidences of local leaders marshaling labour resources for public works and charity.

⁵⁶ The intervention into financial education by a Catholic church group has a precedent, as described by Katherine Wiegele (2005), who studied the popular El Shaddai sect. While El Shaddai followers made closer connections between their religious action and prosperity, the BCCM shared their views regarding the connections between individual responsible expenditure and piety, as well as the possibilities for poverty alleviation.

⁵⁷ For example, the anxieties surrounding the failures of motherhood by migrant women contradicted my own observations of how childcare was often organised. Despite being told throughout my fieldwork when discussing childcare that parents - particularly mothers - were the 'optimal' carers for children, especially when in infancy, I consistently noted that childcare and other child-rearing labour was absolutely not the preserve of parents, and when parents did perform childcare, it was rarely solely for their own children. While parents would care for their child more than anyone else, the majority of childcare would usually be performed adequately and happily by an assembly of relatives, including grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles and elder siblings. Suffice to say here that it is likely that compared to contexts where the responsibility for childcare is both structurally and ideologically placed upon the parents, the absence of a parent - in terms of access to care alone - would not affect children in Batangas to the same degree.

⁵⁸ Critiques of '*sikolohiyang Pilipino*' have convincingly historicised its emergence and academic currency within nationalist narratives of nation-making (Salazar 1985), and in contemporary work the term usually applies to 'indigenous psychology' in the Philippines, covering *self-representations* of psycho-cultural traits by Filipinos (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino 2000).

⁵⁹ Until the recent institution of the K+12 curriculum 'values education' was called *edukasyon sa pagpapahalaga* (education in respect or valuing what is important), and reinforced a number of facets of the established 'pantheon' of Filipino values, including *utang na loob* and *pakikisama* (Mulder 2001: 436-442). After 2013, however, the curriculum changed the name of this portion to '*edukasyon sa pagpapakatao*', which translates more closely to 'being human' or 'humanity', and began to place more emphasis on a universalist ethics rather than particular qualities Filipinos were supposed to have.

⁶⁰ Such views existed alongside other 'emic' understandings of the psycho-racial idiosyncrasies of modern Filipinos; for comparison, see Hannah Bulloch's (2013) material on 'auto-racism' in Siquijor.

⁶¹ McKinnon & Cannell also argue that a similar modernist 'divestment' takes place in the in the relationship between economy and kinship (2013: 15), a position that resonates with other material on love and remittances, some of which is discussed earlier in the this chapter (Alipio 2009; Boris & Parreñas 2010; Zelizer 2010; Katigbak 2015).

⁶² A similar absence of colloquial usages of '*utang na loob*' is found for Bicol by Cannell (1999: 106), though this does not exclude its applicability to certain behaviours and interactions.

⁶³ Mentioned in chapter 2 as the custodians of the '*Tres Caida*' saint in Santa Clara.

⁶⁴ For older generations, meaning most of the adults in Palaw, this rite was performed by a traditional healer, but after the mid-nineties, it seemed as though people stopped having circumcisions at home or in ritual sites in the countryside, and instead opted for medicalised procedures at the local clinic or even the regional hospital.

⁶⁵ As circumcision is not prescribed by any church teaching in the Philippines, recent studies have attempted to discern the motivation behind the persistence of the practice. Easily the most influential factor is fear of being labelled as '*supot*' (Lee 2005: 91).

⁶⁶ Her mother's family did not come from Batangas, but from Mindoro, leaving Lalu somewhat isolated from her five maternal aunts and uncles.

⁶⁷ Although Joy and the administrator were distantly related, neither she, nor he, nor their families saw them as being part of the same '*pamilya*'. Instead, they were described as being '*kamag-anak*', meaning relatives, or literally 'kindred children'.

⁶⁸ When I came back to Palaw in the 2014, Ines had apparently moved to Nasugbu several months previously.

⁶⁹ A similar argument is possible regarding the increasing number of transnational families and their stretching of normative expectations of sex, love, care and affect in Batangas. Whereas in Delhi, the facilitation of 'love marriages' allowed state-legal institutions to reinforce themselves by reasserting their unique capability to establish the legitimacy of certain relationships, in Batangas the PFW and BCCM stretched the boundaries of the 'monolithic', nationalist and morally heavily-laden institution of the 'Filipino family' in order to include transnational families and other kinds of kinship that would otherwise fall outside of it. By reconciling these new forms of familial relations, transnational families themselves were able to uphold ideologies of strong relations between, for instance, parents and children, in the mode of the 'traditional Filipino family'.

⁷⁰ While contemporary organisations designed to represent youth interests (of those aged 15-18) in local and national Philippine politics, such as the '*Katipunan ng Kabataan*' (Federation of Youth), and its local chapters, '*Sangguniang Kabataan*' (Youth Council, or SK), still exist, they are at best considered as mere organisers of basketball tournaments and beauty pageants and at worst breeding grounds for '*trapoliticos*' - the next generation of self-serving politicians (Velasco 2005: 88-90). In Palaw during my fieldwork, the municipality SK was only intermittently active in ceremonial aspects of local governance, and its committee was elected uncontested.

⁷¹ It should be noted that in Batangas, McDonald's restaurants did not represent a cheap or low-status option for eating out - trips to fast-food restaurants, particularly foreign chains were considered treats by most of my informants, and many of my meetings with the ISA *barkada* took place over fries and soft drinks at the McDonald's in Santa Clara. Consequently, working at the restaurant was a very desirable part-time job, though the turnover of staff was very high.

⁷² Only a minority of students stayed in the dormitory accommodation offered to ISA students, as this was only available to those who lived too far away from Santa Clara to stay with relatives or who couldn't afford private accommodation in the town. These accommodations were often four- or five-bedroom houses in which students lived communally and unsupervised. Dorm wardens, strict rules and curfews at university lodgings were the norm elsewhere, and were not envied by ISA students.

⁷³ This does not represent so great a bias, however, as the proportion of temporary Filipino migrants who are women has recently been greater than those who are men, and has varied between 54-74% between 1993 and 2005 (Orbeta & Abrigo 2009: 7). This data is drawn from state statistics, however, and so does not account for extra-legal and unrecorded migrations.

⁷⁴ Verandette V. Gonzalez (2013) has in fact illustrated how American imperialism in the Pacific has always implicated tourism as well, as she charts the historic connections between militaristic and touristic interventions in Hawai'i and the Philippines. For instance, secret reconnaissance missions to Hawai'i - before the first stages of its annexation in 1898 - were undertaken by American generals under the guise of a vacation.

⁷⁵ The survey I conducted at the high school demonstrated the popularity of 'seafaring' as desired career: 6.25% of the class, representing twelve students, only one of whom was female.

⁷⁶ 'Resort' was a local Taglish term for these sites, though it necessary to differentiate between them from 'resorts' as commonly understood in English, and as might be found elsewhere in the world in more modernised, upmarket tourist destinations. Similar kinds sites have been identified in Davao City, where they are referred to as 'beach parks' (Ness 2003: 203-229), though I have chosen to retain the local term so as to highlight the similarities in architectural form and usage between resorts on the coast and those inland.

⁷⁷ In 2012, foreign tourist arrivals to the Philippines topped 4 million for the first time, continuing a reasonably consistent growth in tourism that has lasted almost a decade, and international visitor receipts in the same year contributed almost 4 billion USD to the Philippines' GDP. This figure is dwarfed, however, by the 23.1 million 'domestic arrivals' within the country. Counterintuitively, 'arrivals' in tourism studies does not necessarily refer to those crossing international borders alone, but also to those travelling to destinations within these borders. This explains the often inflated numbers of 'domestic arrivals' but, it should be noted, would not include the by far most common kind of tourist travel in Batangas: that of Batangueño visitors to informal and unregistered sites within the province.

⁷⁸ An example is captured in the work of Fernando Amorsolo, a late nineteenth-century painter whose work depicts the rural Philippines, mostly the southern Luzon region where I also conducted fieldwork, as an idyll in the compositional style of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German romanticism. His scenes of smiling fruit pickers, village ‘*pyesta*’ and workers in lush sun-drenched rice paddies wearing the wide conical ‘*salakot*’ hat attempt to produce an image of an authentically Tagalog ‘*Folk*’.

⁷⁹ After having lived in Palaw and Santa Clara for about a year, I conducted a series of longer interviews on the subject of future life courses - with a particular focus on education and work - with twelve of the students I was best acquainted with at the ISA, with three at Palaw NHS, and one student who attended the ALS school in Palaw. These more in-depth interviews took place away from their homes, and I encouraged students to narrate both their lives to date and to imagine a narrative which captured their desires and anticipations for the future. When I returned to Batangas in 2014, I repeated the interviews with two of the students. It is on both of these sets of in-depth interviews, and the stories told within them, that this chapter is primarily based.

⁸⁰ This kind of ideology is itself not extricable from logics of American colonial rule, in which the racial dichotomies established between ‘wild’ and ‘civilised Catholic’ populations did not always privilege the Christians. Highlanders and forest-dwellers were reckoned in some American accounts to be more obedient, not morally corrupt, not recalcitrant, lacking troublesome ambitions, and not as ‘deceptive’ and lowlanders (Rafael 2000: 33).

⁸¹ The Iglesia ni Cristo was founded in 1914 by a preacher named Felix Manalo with an aim to create an indigenously Filipino church. Today, the church is extremely popular with labour migrants overseas thanks to its internationally widespread locations, but has come under criticism for its very active role in politics, regularly fielding candidates and instructing congregations to vote for them (Bhaskiaraj 2014: 178). It was also viewed suspiciously by some commentators in the Philippines thanks to the secretive and impenetrable organisation of its leadership, and in Palaw the congregants were viewed as insular and hostile to non-converts.

⁸² In Palaw, there were numerous rumours about the overseas spouses or partners of people in the town, and many people enjoyed telling me stories about how adulterous migrants caused marriages to collapse. During my fieldwork, of course, I was in no position to establish how accurate any of these stories were.

⁸³ Interestingly, more recent anthropologies of pilgrimage have pointed out that the Turners’ analysis of ritual pilgrimage, while in many senses aware of the mobility and movement that comprise them, still choose to make pilgrimage sites themselves the locus of their study, reinforcing a similar kind of ‘spatial bias’ referred to in the introduction to this chapter (Coleman & Eade 2004: 2-3).

⁸⁴ In 2015, ‘*balikbayan*’ boxes became a point of contention when the Philippines government threatened the potential tightening of ‘*balikbayan*’ tax breaks, in part spurred by a desire to reduce the country’s economic dependence on remittances. Migrant activists responded by organising ‘zero-remittance days’, when they sent no money back the Philippines.

⁸⁵ ‘Batch’ reunions, reuniting classmates from particular graduating classes, enjoyed similar kinds of food and decorations, and although they did not have the same emphasis on gift exchange still allowed for the kind of exchange of stories and life pathways that happened after graduation from the school the attendees shared.

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